IDIOSYNCRASIES IN THE LATE MUGHAL PAINTING TRADITION

THE ARTIST MIHR CHAND, SON OF GANGA RAM (FL. 1759-86)

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Submitted for the degree of PhD
2009

I, Malini Roy, declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the stylistic development of the artist 'Mihr Chand, son of Ganga Ram' (fl. 1759-86), who travelled across northern India in the hope of finding a beneficent patron. The initial hypothesis, which this thesis proposes, is that Mihr Chand's idiosyncratic approach to the established painting tradition earmarked him as the forerunner in the late eighteenth century art scene in Faizabad and Delhi. I suggest that it was Mihr Chand's thirst for new knowledge that prompted the artist to evaluate the visual resources available and assimilate these new techniques within his works rather than a consequence of the influence of his European patron, Antoine Polier. As Mihr Chand primarily flourished in Faizabad (1765-76), in the province of Awadh, I offer a review on the position of the provincial governors, the Nawabs of Awadh, on their role as the initiators of the late Mughal painting tradition during the second half of the eighteenth century in Chapter 1. To provide the context to analyse Mihr Chand's stylistic development, I suggest a revised and expanded art historical framework of the painting tradition that took place in Delhi and Awadh in Chapter 2. This chapter also addresses the issue of European officers, who cultivated and sponsored local artists to produce numerous illustrations and paintings in Faizabad and later in Lucknow. The following chapter outlines Mihr Chand's biographical details and his chronology of style. I develop Mihr Chand's approach to landscape, portraiture, and architectural drawings in Chapters 4-6. The last two chapters question the artist's originality and his direct impact on artists in Faizabad, Lucknow, Delhi, and Jaipur at the end of the eighteenth century.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BL APAC	The British Library, Asia, Pacific and Africa Collections, London
BnF	Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris
V&A	Victoria & Albert Museum, London
MIK	Museum fur Islamische Kunst, Berlin
MAK	Museum fur Indische Kunst, Berlin
MFA	Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
LACMA	Los Angeles County Museum of Art

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

From the very start of the PhD process in the autumn of 2003 and to its completion, J.P. Losty—my mentor and external supervisor—has been inspiring, supporting and, above all, patient. His unfailingly kind and good-humoured supervision over the years has been hugely appreciated. I am also extremely grateful to Professor Doris Behrens-Abouseif. She has always provided warm encouragement throughout my postgraduate years and has undertaken the arduous task of supervising my thesis at SOAS. Without her perseverance, I may not have been able to see the paintings of Mihr Chand in Berlin.

Many thanks are also due to the University of London's Central Research Fund and SOAS who awarded me with the finances to conduct my fieldwork in India and Europe.

As my project focused on numerous museum and private collections, I would like to express my gratitude to the many individuals who have provided access to their collections: The Achenbach Collection for Graphic Arts, San Francisco: Louise Siddons; The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford: Andrew Topsfield; The British Library: Jody Butterworth, Helen George, John Falconer, Jennifer Howes, and J.P. Losty; Museum für Indische Kunst, Berlin: Russel Dik, Rafael Gadesbusch, and Marianne Yaldiz; the Royal Collection at Windsor Castle: Emma Stuart; and at the Victoria & Albert Museum: Nick Barnard. In particular, I am indebted to Dr. C.P. Hasse, Regina Hickmann, and Frau Kant at the Museum für Islamische Kunst in Berlin, for providing access and the permission to photograph the miniature paintings from the Hamilton albums.

My research on the later Mughal painting tradition could not have been as informative without the helpful guidance of Robert Skelton who suggested new avenues to research Mihr Chand's father, Ganga Ram, translated the frontispieces of the Polier albums, and introduced me to his amazing slide collection that contains countless unpublished miniature paintings.

This project would have not been possible without the encouragement and moral support of fellow PhD students at SOAS including Savita Apte, Selen Etingu, Emily Shovelton as well as Ainsley Cameron at Oxford University. Bora Keskiner, also at SOAS, assisted with translating the more complicated Persian inscriptions. I am also

indebted to Annabelle Khan for her support and undertaking the arduous task of reading through the thesis.

My final thanks goes to my parents Girin and Gauri Roy and my sister Ananya Roy. Without their love and support, I would never have endured the long process of researching and writing my thesis. To my husband, Solon Mikhailides, who met me during the writing stages of my thesis - his never-ending support, patience and humour has finally seen me to the end of this project.

INTRODUCTION

1. Overview

Whilst sifting through the immense collections of the British Library during the summer of 2002, I was overwhelmed by the abundance of drawings and paintings by Indian artists produced in Calcutta, Faizabad, Lucknow, and Murshidabad that were commissioned by European and British residents in the late eighteenth century. Aside from popular subjects such as portraits of the Mughal emperors and *ragamala* pictures, these collectors commissioned maps of the region, natural history studies, as well as ethnographical studies of the people of India. Many of these albums as well as loose folios can be traced back to their original patron or collector. Striving to understand this vogue of patronage and connoisseurship and, more importantly, the relationship between the artist and patron was vitally significant and enraptured my attention. After researching the catalogues of several major museums and libraries, I was able to asses that Richard Johnson, Sir Elijah Impey, the Marquess of Hastings, Marquis Wellesley, William Fullarton, Major Antoine Polier, and Colonel Jean Baptiste Gentil were the most important players in the art market in India at this time. As Lucian Harris (2002) recently completed the arduous task of documenting many of these important figures in his doctoral thesis on 'British collecting of Indian art and artefacts in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries', I decided it would be of great interest to determine the impact of patronage on the career of one specific artist. However, undertaking this project and determining an artist's significance within the greater context of Indian art would not be straightforward.

B.N. Goswamy (1997) is one of the rare art historians who has uncovered primary historical documentation that traces the genealogy of a specific group of artists, the descendents of Pandit Seu, who flourished during the eighteenth century in the Pahari region of northern India. Goswamy (1997, 10) elegantly writes: 'To trace the life and career of a painter in India is somewhat akin to following the course of an earthen lamp on swift waters. The flow is bright and warm, and one can keep it within sight for a while, but quickly things turn and uncharted vastness takes over.' Goswamy's viewpoint applies to many of the eighteenth century artists such as Mihr Chand, Nevasi Lal, Dip Chand, and Shaikh Muhammad Amir whose signatures appear on paintings and sometimes their names are fleetingly mentioned in the personal correspondence and records of collectors, though tracing their personal histories is almost impossible.

Nonetheless, Goswamy has found success by tracing records of pilgrimages kept by priests in northern Indian towns to uncover biographical details on Pandit Seu and his descendants including Nainsukh. Such a rare discovery only occurs once in a lifetime.[1]

In order to research the artists working for British and European residents in the Mughal provinces of Awadh and Bengal, there are untapped resources including correspondence and private papers, albums of paintings as well as memoirs that could yield further information on patronage and possibly on the artists themselves. The Swiss native Antoine Louis Henri Polier (1741-95) affiliated to the British East India Company and Emperor Shah Alam II (r. 1759-1806) archived his personal and business correspondence for the period 1773 to 1780. Amongst these documents, we find notes regarding his collecting habits and opinions on Indian art. Polier also commissioned a series of albums, which contained contemporary and older examples of Indian painting and calligraphy. Several of the albums assembled for Polier are still intact and can be located in several public collections including the British Library, the Achenbach Collection for Graphic Arts (San Francisco), and the Museum für Islamische Kunst (Berlin).

In 1922, the German scholar Ernst Kühnel (1922), while reviewing a series of albums containing Mughal and Deccani paintings in the Museum für Islamische Kunst, identified 'Major Antoine Polier' as a major collector of the artist by the name of 'Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram.' Inside several of these albums, Polier's scribe had noted on the frontispieces details of Polier's ownership, the contents of the album and in a few instances, the date and location where the album was assembled. Furthermore, according to Kühnel (1922), these albums contained twenty-two paintings ascribed to the artist; he estimated that upon further research, there were several other paintings, including portraits of Mughal emperors, which could be attributed to the artist.

This series of albums, which were originally commissioned by Antoine Polier, were acquired by the Royal Prussian Museums in 1882 directly from the Hamilton Palace Library in Scotland and were part of a larger collection of Indian and Persian paintings and specimens of calligraphy. In recent years, Lucian Harris (2001) traced the provenance of eleven of these albums directly back to Polier. According to Harris, William Beckford (1760-1844) purchased many of these albums from Polier in the late 1790s. After Beckford's death, his collection was merged into the library at Hamilton

[1] There are only a few cases in which the genealogical details can be located. One other well known example is the Umarani Ustas of Bikaner who flourished from the mid-sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries (Topsfield 2000, 57-64).

Palace belonging to his son-in-law, the 10th Duke of Hamilton. These albums are referred typically as the Hamilton collection. Perhaps it would be more accurate to refer to the albums that originated from Polier's collection as the Polier-Beckford-Hamilton collection or simply the Polier-Hamilton collection. German scholars, including Kühnel's successors Hermann Goetz (1930, 1952-53, 1967) and Regina Hickmann (1975), continued to publish material from these albums, including the paintings by Mihr Chand. In November 1974, there was a new development. Sotheby's auction house placed on the market, from the collection of Sir Thomas Phillipps Bt (1792-1872), an album consisting of 47 double-sided folios of Indian paintings and examples of calligraphy that were similar to the Polier albums in Berlin. Sotheby's (1974) described this album Phillipps Ms. 6730:

> Many of the examples on calligraphy on the verso of the leaves are dated and the latest of these dates corresponds with AD 1784-85, which suggests that the assembly of the album took place about 1785. Most of the leaves have broad decorative floral border of bold design and rather gaudy colouring, and the style of these borders corresponds very closely with those of the Hamilton albums which are now in the Staatliches Museum für Indische Kunst, Berlin.

Inside, on the frontispiece, there was an illuminated sunburst medallion that was prepared for an inscription. Disappointingly, this was left blank. On the reverse of this folio, there was a fascinating portrait of a 'European Gentleman in Indian dress entertained by dancing girls on a terrace at night' ascribed to 'Mihr Chand, son of Ganga Ram' (figure 1). Whilst the auction catalogue noted that this album was 'prepared for another European collector in Lucknow' and not Antoine Polier, art historians including J. P. Losty (2002, 52) contend that the sitter is in fact Polier. As a result, the visual evidence solidifies the connection between artist and patron.

From the perspective of the art historian, Phillipps album Ms. 6730 in its entirety may have provided further clues to Mihr Chand's artistic style and Polier's patronage. Lamentably, this album was unbound and the individual folios were sold separately. From this album, only two signed works by Mihr Chand can be traced. The first being the portrait of Polier that is located in the private collection of His Highness Sadruddin Aga Khan (figure 1) (Canby, 1998). The second is a portrait of Shuja ud-Daula, now in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford (figure 2).

Evidence affirming the connection between artist and patron continued to emerge. In 1984, French scholars Francis Richard and G. Colas (1984) published details of the phenomenal compilation of letters composed in Persian by Polier in the collection

of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. Their article provided an overview of the contents of Polier's letters and identified the recipients of these letters, including the 'painter Mihr Chand'. In 2001, Muzaffar Alam and Seema Alavi (Polier 2001) had accomplished the complicated task of translating and publishing the first volume of Polier's letters that were written from June 1773 to March 1780. The second volume 'pertain[s] to Polier's service at the court of Emperor Shah Alam' and has yet to be translated. As the original letters were written in *nasta'liq* and *shikast* scripts, it would be the first time for many scholars to discover the extent of the contents of Polier's letters to his agents and acquaintances in India. With this bountiful resource of first-hand documentation, it comes as a great surprise that scholars had yet to unravel the identity of Mihr Chand.

This thesis aims to contextualise the artist known as 'Mihr Chand, son of Ganga Ram' (fl. 1759-86) within the greater context of a revised and expanded framework of the later Mughal painting tradition by reviewing his signed works from the Polier-Beckford-Hamilton albums in Berlin. The circumstances surrounding Mihr Chand's career was experienced by many of the Mughal artists, who were established in Delhi and were forced to travel across northern India in order to seek alternative sources of financial patronage. I question how this artist persevered in a time of uncertainty: Why does his work warrant our attention? What was the impact of patronage on his work? And why does Mihr Chand's artistic brilliance overshadow the work of his contemporaries?

2. Methodology

To recognise Mihr Chand's importance, there are several factors to be considered. Patronage plays an essential role towards determining the course of an artist's career. Specifically focusing on Mihr Chand, there are different individuals that need to be investigated as well. Although Antoine Polier's letters and albums offer a considerable amount of information on his patronage of Mihr Chand, it is necessary to research the other players who may have influenced the tradition of painting both in Delhi and in Awadh. Imperial patrons such as the descendents of Emperor Muhammad Shah (r. 1719-48) as well as the provincial Mughal governors of Awadh and Bengal are likely candidates. Aside from Polier, there were other noteworthy European and British officers, including Jean Baptiste Gentil and Richard Johnson, who commissioned and

collected Indian paintings in this region. In regards to Mihr Chand's career, I question if the artist's success was strictly indebted to Polier's beneficence or were there other patrons that gave rise to Mihr Chand's career?

Mihr Chand and his fellow contemporary artists flourished at the Nawabi courts in Awadh, either at Lucknow or Faizabad, during the second half of the eighteenth century. Due to the presence of such artists in the region the local painting tradition, albeit based on the later Mughal tradition, began to take form. To contextualise Mihr Chand within this period, I need to overcome a major obstacle: a lacuna in the scholarship of the painting tradition of the eighteenth century. Of course, one must first define and clarify what is meant by the terms 'later Mughal', 'provincial Mughal' and 'Awadhi' painting. This thesis will also investigate the decline of the Mughal painting tradition in the first half of the eighteenth century in Delhi and document the inception of the Awadhi style in the cities of Lucknow and Faizabad during the second half of the eighteenth century. In particular, I will examine the major imperial patrons from the period of Bahadur Shah I (r. 1707-12) through to Shah Alam II (r. 1759-1806) in order to determine what factors impeded the continuation of the Mughal style in Delhi. In terms of the rise of the Awadhi painting tradition in the mid-1750s, I question whether there was a single individual responsible for its inception, or was it the culmination of the combined endeavours of local and European patronage?

This thesis aims to establish a comprehensive overview of Awadhi painting tradition from its inception in the mid-1750s through to the 1780s. Toby Falk and Mildred Archer's (1981) introduction to painting in Awadh was the starting point for my research on this topic. Further research was conducted by reviewing catalogues published by museums and private collections, auction and dealer catalogues, as well as on-line resources. Using Falk & Archer's identification of artists who flourished in the cities of Faizabad and Lucknow, this thesis will provide an expanded list of the major artists and note their styles, the key patrons in the region, as well as identifying the known 'workshops' that were sponsored by European officers. With this exhaustive list in hand, I will be able to determine which artists flourished approximately at the same time as Mihr Chand.

Through researching the artist, I aim to provide an overview of his biography and offer a chronological assessment of his stylistic evolution. The starting point of this research will be the artist's signed works in the Polier-Hamilton albums in Berlin. Through analysing these paintings and categorising them as the artist's core work, I will evaluate his artistic achievements in the areas of portraiture, devising landscape, and

architectural studies of Mughal landmarks. From recognising the artist's unique style, I will also be able to attribute works that I believe were produced by the artist and were not ascribed to the artist or unsigned.

It could be questioned whether it would be more prudent to focus directly on Antoine Polier as a connoisseur of Indian art and provide a comprehensive overview of each album he commissioned. This would require analysis of every painting and specimen of calligraphy. As Polier's collection was extensive, it would be arduous to trace every album he commissioned, particularly if the album was unbound and folios sold separately. Another challenge faced in reviewing the entire collection is that one would require specialist knowledge of Indian painting in general, as the original collection included a broad range of early Mughal, Deccani, and even Persian Safavid paintings alongside the Awadhi works. On the verso of many of these folios, there are calligraphic passages that would also require specialist knowledge of various scripts and languages. One questions what would be the art historical value, as many of the more important works have already been identified and published in various German publications (Enderlein and Hickmann 1979; Anand and Goetz 1967). In this instance, due to the number of signed paintings by Mihr Chand, it is more valuable to focus on the artist and his contributions within this collection. Through analysing his 'core' paintings, it will be possible to document the key aspects of Mihr Chand's style for this brief period, from 1773-86. The visual evidence complimented by the textual evidence in Polier's letters, will enable a comprehensive investigation.

Combining this visual evidence with the information provided in Polier's letters to Mihr Chand, we have for the first time a remarkable case study that can be used to help define the early phase of the Awadhi painting tradition. From this starting point, any works that are signed or attributed to Mihr Chand, outside of the Berlin material, can be understood and placed within an appropriate context.

3. Source Material

Antoine Polier's lengthy career in India spanned a period of thirty years, from 1758 to 1788, during which he showed an overwhelming interest towards understanding the local culture, becoming proficient in Persian, as well as acquiring rare texts and examples of paintings from across the subcontinent. In this time frame, Polier amassed a vast collection including illustrated manuscripts, religious texts such as the *Rig Veda*,

and numerous *muraqqas* of paintings. To trace Polier's collecting habits would be tedious; therefore, this thesis will focus on the complete albums of paintings that he commissioned as the primary source to understand the artist Mihr Chand.

The Museum für Islamische Kunst in Berlin holds an extraordinary series of albums, seven of which were commissioned directly by Polier, as well as one volume that Polier received as a gift from the emperor Shah Alam II in 1767-68.[2] The frontispieces or *shamsas* in several of these albums include inscriptions documenting Antoine Polier's ownership, date and location of production, and sometimes the contents of the album.[3] Two of these albums are inscribed in French '*Volume Troisieme*' and '*Volume Septieme*'. Perhaps Polier was interested in systematising these albums following both a western system as well as by using Persian notations. Within this series, there is one album (MIK I 4594) that is vital towards understanding the artist's style, as it contains seventeen miniature paintings ascribed to the artist 'Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram'.

In the Museum für Indische Kunst in Berlin, there are two further albums that were commissioned by Polier. The first (MIK I 5005) contains topographical views of Mughal landmarks and gardens in Kashmir, a *darbar* of Shah Alam II, as well as introspective views inside the *zenana*. The second (MIK I 5063) was entitled by Polier as '*Genialogie des Empereurs*'. In its original binding of brown leather morocco embossed with golden cartouches, the contents include twenty-two double-sided folios. On the verso of each folio, there is a portrait of a noteworthy historical figure and on the reverse a specimen of calligraphy. This album contains numerous calligraphic passages by the Awadhi poet Muhammad Ali.

The Phillipps album (Ms. 6730), now dispersed though originally in the collection of Sir Thomas Phillipps Bt, has a similar frontispiece or an 'illuminated roundel with central gilt-sprinkled area prepared for an inscription' (Sotheby 1974, 79). This frontispiece is almost identical to those in the Polier-Hamilton albums in Berlin. This album original contained forty-five double-sided folios. Aside from numerous portrait studies (including Mihr Chand's portrait of Antoine Polier), there were examples of calligraphy by Awadhi poets including Muhammad Ali, Hafiz Nurallah, and Imad al-Husayni. Unfortunately, the individual folios of this album were sold at auction and it has proven difficult to track down each page. As Sotheby's identified several portraits studies in the 'style of Mihr Chand,' these examples might have

[2] MIK I 4593-4601.
[3] See Appendix IV for a list of albums belonging to Antoine Polier.

provided further insight into the artist's style. Nonetheless, the auction house did reproduce many of the pages of this album, which aide in deconstructing the artist's style.

The Achenbach Collection for Graphic Arts (San Francisco) holds another important album that can be traced to Antoine Polier. The Swiss native dedicated this bound volume to Lady Coote in 1786. Inside the flyleaf of this album, Polier wrote: 'For Lady Coote from Hermostobdet. HbleSert./A.P.' Lady Coote was the wife of Sir Eyre Coote, one of Polier's commanding officers. Sir Eyre Coote was instrumental in aiding Polier to return to Awadh in 1780. According to museum records, the Achenbach Collection acquired twenty folios from this album from Mr. John MacDonald in Massachusetts. The last four folios are now in the collection of the Sackler Museum at Harvard, the San Diego Museum of Art, and in the collection of Edwin Binney. The reason for this dispersal of the album is unclear. The frontispiece, identical in style to those in the Polier-Hamilton albums, is inscribed 'This book of drawings and specimens of fine penmanship in the art of similitude and expedition together with pieces of *Nast'aliq* and *Sols* and *Shafiaic* and *Golzar* and *Skekasteh* scripts.' The contents of this album is noteworthy; inside, the album contained almost identical topographical views of Kashmir and illustrations of Mughal landmarks that are found in Berlin (MIK I 5005).

In the British Library in London, there are two volumes (Or. 4760 and Or. 4770) on Hindu mythology that were commissioned by Polier in Faizabad in the 1770s and acquired by William Beckford in 1787 or 1788. The bindings and design of the albums, including the floral marginal decorations surrounding each painting, are similar to the Polier-Hamilton albums in Berlin.[4] Each of these albums contains thirty-two single-sided folios. On each folio there is a representation of a Hindu deity painted in the Awadhi style of the 1770-80s. Inside the first volume, Polier provided an introduction to these albums as well as a detailed description for each illustration. In describing these paintings, J.P. Losty wrote:

> These are apparently painted in a traditional fashion, but in fact under considerable technical influence. Normally, all the figures are in three-quarter profile, their figures beautifully modelled, standing or sitting except where noted

[4] The majority of albums commissioned by Antoine Polier can be identified by the marginal decorations on each of the folios. There are two different designs used by Polier's workshop: either a multi-coloured Florentine floral design or a Persian influenced border with animals and floral designs painted in gold against a dark background. The decoration and examples will be presented in Chapter 2.

> on plain brown grounds against an uncoloured background shading to blue for the sky. Watercolour washes are used throughout, saturated where necessary, but unburnished and apparently without gum arabic. Flesh modelling and shading is achieved mostly by the use of stippling. Landscapes where present are brushed in green streaks merging into blue in the distance with hills or small trees, in an impressionistic version of the typical Dip Chand/Mihr Chand type of landscape. Shadows, sometimes heavy, fall normally to the right.[5]

Whilst Losty determines that there are similarities between the painted landscapes in these albums and with Mihr Chand's style, there is no supporting documentation that connects Mihr Chand directly to these illustrations.

Aside from Polier, it is well known that both Richard Johnson and Jean Baptiste Gentil commissioned local artists as well. Richard Johnson (1753-1807), the Assistant to the British Resident, was station in Lucknow between 1780 and 1782. Johnson primarily collected paintings and drawings that were produced in Awadh and Bengal in this period, with particular emphasis on *ragamala* paintings. Johnson's collection holds the key to understanding Awadhi painting; amongst the sixty-seven bound volumes of Indian paintings, there are numerous signed paintings that aide constructing a framework of the local painting tradition. I hope that by reviewing this collection I will be able to shed light on Mihr Chand's contemporaries and the style of Awadhi painting of the eighteenth century.

Unlike Polier and Johnson who were affiliated with the British East India Company, Jean Baptiste Gentil (1726-99) was a Frenchman who enlisted with the *Compagnie des Indes Orientales* in 1752. After a short career with the French company, Gentil joined the service of the Nawab of Awadh in the capacity of military advisor and resided in the city of Faizabad from 1763 to 1775. Gentil, was both an aficionado of Persian and Sanskrit manuscripts as well as Mughal, Deccani and Safavid paintings.[6] Nonetheless, Gentil is known more for the illustrated manuscripts that he commissioned in the 1770s. Working together with Awadhi artists Nevasi Lal and Mohan Singh, he commissioned *Abrégé historique des souverains de l'indoustan ou Empire Mongol* (BnF, Paris), *Receuil de toutes sortes des Dessins sur les Usages et coutumes des Peuples de I'indoustan ou Empire Mogol* (V&A, London), and a volume of maps entitled *Empire Mogol divisé en 21 soubahs ou gouvernements tiré de differens écrivains du pais en Faisabad en MDCCLXX* (BL APAC, London).

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[5] BL APAC, Or.4760 and Or. 4770. This description is provided from the British Library Online catalogue: http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/indiaofficeselectpd/CollectionSum.aspx?CollID=016-000000359.

[6] Several albums that were owned by Gentil are in the collection of the BnF, Paris.

Alongside the visual material, Polier's Persian correspondence provides an unparalleled primary source of evidence that documents Mihr Chand's career in Faizabad and later in Delhi. These letters, date from June 1773 to March 1780, covering Polier's relocation from Calcutta to Faizabad and his subsequent move to Delhi. The BnF holds two volumes of correspondence. The first volume of letters were translated and published by Muzaffar Alam and Seema Alavi (Polier 2001). The details provided in these letters reveal that Polier and Mihr Chand were in close contact with one another and that Polier recognised the artist as a member of his household. The second volume of letters have not been fully translated or published as of this date; as previously mentioned, these letters 'pertain to Polier's service at the court of Shah Alam II' (Polier 2001, 12). In this thesis, Polier's letters will be referenced in relation to Mihr Chand's career and several of his paintings. These letters, while they offer first-hand documentation of Mihr Chand's employment with Polier, more importantly must be recognised for their art historical value, as this is the only known collection of letters addressed by a European to an Indian artist during the eighteenth century.

Complementing the primary sources, there are several important secondary sources that needed to be consulted. Without any doubt, in researching the later Mughal period of painting, one must turn to the publications by Mildred Archer. Her achievement in recognising the impact of the British portrait painter Tilly Kettle, who visited Faizabad in the 1770s, on local artists is extremely important. Archer (1972) in her article 'Tilly Kettle and the Court of Oudh', documents the paintings that were produced as a direct consequence of Kettle's influence. Of the Awadhi artists, Archer lists Mihr Chand and Nevasi Lal as the two main artists who absorbed Kettle's trademarks and style of portraying Nawab Shuja ud-Daula.

The co-publication by Archer and Toby Falk (1981) on the *Indian Miniatures in the India Office Library* is perhaps the most important source of information on later Mughal painting in Awadh. As the bulk of the former India Office Library's Indian painting collection is formed of Richard Johnson's collection, Falk and Archer have been able to provide a preliminary overview of the later Mughal painting styles that appeared in Awadh, Bengal as well as at the minor court of Farrukhabad. This overview on the topic is an excellent starting point for any research on the topic. Linda York Leach has also made significant contributions towards building an abridged framework on the Awadhi painting tradition. In her second volume on *Mughal Paintings at the Chester Beatty Library* (1995), she documented the Fremantle album, which she believed was commissioned by Nawab Shuja ud-Daula. Leach also attributed several

works within this album to Mihr Chand. Of great importance, Leach identified a portrait by an artist named Ganga Ram whom she believed was the father of Mihr Chand. Leach (1998) also wrote a short comparative essay on Mihr Chand and his contemporary Mir Kalan Khan, looking particularly at their approach to drawing landscape.

Aside from these overviews on Awadhi painting, a relatively unknown scholar, Patricia Baryliski (1993), has written an article on 'Painting in Awadh in the 18th century.' Her article covers many of the questions asked in this thesis, such as patronage, and offers a partial list of the major artists and their known works. More importantly, Baryliski draws on the letters of Antoine Polier's letters at the Bibliothèque Nationale as a potential resource on Mihr Chand. She provides excerpts from the letters including details regarding the artist's wages and employment with Polier. Her source for the information noted in her article was Muzaffar Alam (Polier 2001), who would eventually publish the translated letters in 2001. What is rather noteworthy is that Baryliski obtained some intricate details regarding Mihr Chand's career from Alam that were not included in the translated publication, such as details regarding work schedule and wages. One questions if this information was provided in the second volume of letters that have yet to be translated.

In recent years, later Mughal painting has received increased attention. In 2002, Barbara Schmitz's edited volume, *After the Great Mughals: Painting in Delhi and the Regional Courts in the 18th and 19th century*, included two important articles. Terrance McInerney discussed the topic 'Mughal Painting during the reign of Muhammad Shah (r. 1719-49)' and reviewed twelve of the leading artists of the imperial workshop. McInerney identified the new techniques and styles that would become popular and made note of three Delhi artists who would appear in Awadh by the 1760s. J.P. Losty article 'Portraiture in Murshidabad and Awadh, 1750-80', looks closely at the style and techniques of established portraits by artists including Mihr Chand, Bahadur Singh, Mir Kalan Khan, and Dip Chand. For the very first time, these artists are analysed for their independent contributions to the later Mughal tradition. A year after Schmitz's volume was published, Losty (2003) wrote another article, 'Painting at Lucknow 1775-1850'. Here, Losty briefly examines the patronage extended by Richard Johnson and Antoine Polier in Faizabad and Lucknow. Losty also provides a brief overview of the painting tradition during the first half of the nineteenth century. Aside from Losty's contributions, there is no further in-depth analysis on the tradition.

German publications on the collections in the Museum für Islamische Kunst are also extremely useful. In 1979, Regina Hickmann and her colleague Volkmar Enderlein

produced an exquisite reproduction of approximately sixty miniatures and example of calligraphy from the various Polier albums in Berlin. However, their publication focused on the sixteenth century Mughal and Deccani paintings and provided a translation of the important passages of calligraphy. Nonetheless, Hickmann and Enderlein's contribution is significant; the introduction discussed the provenance of the Polier albums including the volume that was presented to Polier by Shah Alam II in 1767.

Raffael Dedo Gadebusch, the Deputy Curator at the Museum für Indische Kunst in Berlin, has also worked on the Polier albums. His article (2000) 'Celestial Gardens: Mughal Miniatures from an Eighteenth Century Album' traces the acquisition of the Polier albums by the Royal Prussian Museums and recounts Polier's career in India. Gadebusch focuses on the Polier-Hamilton album in his collection (MIK I 5005) which contains topographical views and illustrations of the Mughal landmarks. Aside from publishing many of the paintings for the first time, his discussion on the representation of Mughal gardens is superficial and does not further our knowledge on the artistic style or even the genre. In addition, Gadebusch's statements are generalised; his comments include 'this is the only set of miniatures from that particular period to have focused on gardens and architectural vistas'. It comes as a great surprise that the author neglected to notice that this volume contained duplicate architectural views that were included in the Lady Coote album in San Francisco. As Welch (1978, 1997) and Bautze (1998) both published select views from the Lady Coote album, the parallel between these two albums should not have been overlooked. A final criticism, the author stated that 'Polier might have commissioned Mihr Chand to execute this *muraqqa* just before he left Lucknow in 1786.' In reading through the article, the author did not support any evidence of Mihr Chand's hand either in terms of stylistic parallels or written documentation. As Gadebusch published his article in 2000, it is astounding that he was not aware of Polier's letters to the artist. Both Richard and Colas (1984) and Baryliski (1993) had already mentioned Polier's letters in their publications.

CHAPTER 1

Historical framework: the Nawabs of Awadh and their support of the late Mughal painting tradition during the second half of the eighteenth century

Intrigue and warfare consistently plagued the territories of the Indian subcontinent controlled by the Mughals in the eighteenth century, affecting in particular the province of Awadh. Primarily, it was the battles of succession amongst the descendents of Emperor Aurangzeb (r. 1660-1708) that dominated the political arena. With the thoughts and actions of the Mughal princes occupied with their own political aggrandisement, the Mughal capital of Delhi would become the subject of rampant invasions by the Persians and Afghans who took advantage of the volatile political state. Juxtaposed with this, the Mughals were also susceptible to the intrigues and ambitious interests of the Mughal courtiers and high-ranking officials residing in the provinces, as well as the disputes between the rival factions of the Jats and Marathas over territorial expansion. Further compounding the political climate was the encroaching expansion and occupation of their provincial territories by the British East India Company and other European imperialists. With such chaos in the capital, Mughal princes and courtiers gradually dissipated away from the centre and the court, retreating to their provinces in order to recuperate and to rebuild their armies. Examining this relationship between the emperor and the provincial leaders, as well as the rise of the Nawabs of Awadh, in the Mughal province of Awadh is essential in understanding exactly how Mughal culture began to disseminate to the province and ultimately how a new, independent form of 'provincial' Mughal or Awadhi culture began to form and mature. Focusing on Awadh, located in the present day northern state of Uttar Pradesh, we will review the province's history and determine how it played an impact on the patronage and formation of the Mughal-influenced Awadhi painting tradition during the reigns of the provincial governors Nawab Shuja ud-Daula (r. 1754-75) and Nawab Asaf ud-Daula (r. 1775-97) (figure 3).

Awadh or Avadh (anglicised as Oudh) is located to the east of Delhi and its two largest cities in the eighteenth century were Lucknow and Faizabad (figure 4). In the early eighteenth century, this region was governed by a series of Nawabs, an honorary Persian title implying governorship, who were followers of the Shia tradition of Islam. According to a census from 1774 (Barnett 1980, 3), although the ruling family were Muslim, it was recorded that the majority of the population were in fact 87 per cent

Hindu; only a minor 12 per cent were Muslim and there was a small percentage of Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists and tribals. While the Shia tradition became the dominant religion during this period, the origins of the province of Awadh are linked to Hindu mythology. The etymological roots of Awadh can be traced as a variation of Ayodhya, a historical town associated with the Hindu epic the *Ramayana* and the birthplace of Rama (Sharar 1994, 37). In Abu'l Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari* (1927, 182), the court historian wrote: 'Awadh is one of the largest cities [sic] of India. It is situated in longitude 118°, 6' and latitude 27°, 22'. In ancient times, its populous site covered an extent of 148 *kos* in length and 36 in breadth, and it is esteemed one of the holiest places of antiquity.' Although one may expect the region to be intimately associated with Hindu rulers, historical events lead to the contrary. The proximity between Delhi and Awadh was altogether a desirable target for the Sultans of Delhi during the thirteenth century, as well as the Mughals in the sixteenth century. Historical accounts documented by the famed traveller Ibn-i Battuta (Sharma 1959, 32) remarked in reference to the 1338-41 famine in Delhi, that 'Alakhnau [Lucknow] supplied large quantities of grain to Muhammad-bin-Tughluq, the Sultan of Delhi (r. 1325-51).'

Awadh's association with the Mughals commenced in the sixteenth century, when Emperor Babur (r. 1526-30) and his son Humayun resided briefly in the city of Lucknow from 1526-28. By the end of the sixteenth century, the Mughals had appropriated the region as part of their domain. Abu'l Fazl's (1927, 129) account in *Ain-i-Akbari* provides details on Emperor Akbar's (r. 1556-1605) decision to divide the Mughal Empire into 'twelve divisions, to each of which he gave the name of *subah* and distinguished them by the appellation of the tract of country or its capital city'. Awadh became one of these twelve *subahs* and the Mughals appointed a *subadar* (governor) for each province who would be responsible for 'securing the revenues, preserving law and order, maintaining roads and communications, and ensuring a fixed minimum of military aid to the emperor'. Although the Mughals exerted political influence in Awadh as early as the late sixteenth century, there was only limited evidence of Mughal culture affecting architectural traditions and cultural idioms in this early period. The dominant phase of Mughal influence would appear in the region during the second half of the eighteenth century in Awadh.

Although Akbar's court historian Abu'l Fazl recorded that the division of the empire and the appropriation of the *subah* of Awadh occurred by 1594, it is possible to trace the earliest *subadars* of Awadh as far back as the 1560s (Sharma 1959, 35). The earliest *subadars* of Awadh included Husain Khan Tukriya (r. 1568), Khwaja Amin-ud-

din Mahmud Khwaja Jahan (r. 1573-74), as well as Jawahar Ali Khan (r. 1574) (Sharma 1959, 35). However, the political climate in Awadh changed during Akbar's reign; the present *subadar* Shaikh Abdur Rahim (r. c. 1590) was so influential that the Mughals could not replace him. Instead, the position passed down via hereditary claim of the Shaikhzada family. After a century of Shaikhzada control, Emperor Muhammad Shah (r. 1719-49) sent an officer named Saadat Khan to wrestle control of the province from the Shaikhzada family. As a result of Saadat Khan's victory, he was appointed as the new *subadar*. His achievement marked the beginning of Nawabi rule that would be propagated by his descendents until the mid-nineteenth century.

The first Nawab of Awadh, Muhammad Amin Saadat Khan *Burhan ul-Mulk* (r. 1722-39), was a descendent of the Saiyids of Nishapur who had migrated from Persia to India in the early eighteenth century.[7] Arriving in Patna, Saadat Khan entered in the service of Murshid Quli Khan, the *subadar* of Patna from 1707 to 1708. Within a few short years, Saadat Khan's political aspirations led him to Delhi where he enlisted in the emperor's army and ultimately was promoted to the prestigious position of the Commander of the Imperial Guard. In 1722, Muhammad Shah appointed Saadat Khan as the *subadar* of Awadh and bestowed on him the title of *Burhan ul-Mulk*; regrettably, the Mughals miscalculated Saadat Khan's ambition and ultimate desire that the post of *subadar* of Awadh could only be tenable for his descendents.

Securing the position of *subadar* of Awadh for his descendents, the title was then conferred to his nephew Safdar Jang in 1739 who had been acting as the deputy governor of the region. Safdar Jang was just as ambitious as his predecessor and focused his political interests in strengthening ties between the provincial court and the Mughal government in Delhi. His efforts were well rewarded by Muhammad Shah, who bestowed on Safdar Jang the highly esteemed position as *Wazir* or Chief Minister of the Mughal Empire. Furthermore, the emperor allocated to the Nawab of Awadh the neighbouring province of Allahabad, thereby doubling his territorial control. As *Wazir,* Safdar Jang was primarily stationed in Delhi and relinquished control of Awadh and Allahabad to his eldest son Shuja ud-Daula and his nephew Muhammad Quli Khan. Unfortunately, Safdar Jang's avaricious nature and his political indiscretions lead him to his downfall. It was his decision to align forces with the Marathas and Jats, both opponents of the Mughals, and wage a battle against the prevailing emperor Ahmad Shah (r. 1748-54) that cost him the position of *Wazir.* Ultimately, the highly esteemed position was granted to Safdar Jang's political opponent and the *Mir Bakhshi*

[7] The Saiyids of Nishapur are direct descendents of the prophet Muhammad.

(Paymaster General of the Empire) known as Ghazi ud-Din Khan *Imad ul-Mulk* in 1754.[8]

Given the political history and the administrative structure of Awadh during the first half of the eighteenth century, combined with the fact that both Saadat Khan and Safdar Jang spent limited periods of time in the region, it becomes extremely difficult to link either of these rulers as sponsors of the fine arts. Furthermore, with their interests vested in their own political aggrandisement, one questions when these rulers would have simply had the time to initiate a movement of artists, calligraphers and poets to a region that was still in a state of political unrest. The lack of miniature painting and even specimens of calligraphy, dating to this early period and produced within the region, suggests that neither Saadat Khan nor Safdar Jang were recognised as patrons of the arts.

Mirza Jalal ud-din Haidar Shuja ud-Daula (r. 1754-75), the third Nawab of Awadh, was born on 19 January 1732 at the palace of Dara Shikoh in Delhi. Raised in the epicentre of Mughal culture, Shuja ud-Daula was fully aware of the traditions associated with the Mughal court. In 1743, Safdar Jang arranged the marriage of Shuja to Muhammad Shah's adopted niece Ummat uz-Zahra (commonly referred to after her marriage as Bahu Begum). Settling with his wife in Faizabad, they would bring Mughal culture to the region. Aside from infusing Mughal court rituals into the daily administration of the province, in developing palaces and buildings in Lucknow (and later in Faizabad), Shuja looked favourably towards the Mughal idiom.

Shuja ud-Daula was no less ambitious than his predecessors. Immediately after the death of his father, he began to assess the political situation and strategise a way to reclaim the position of *Wazir*, which his father had lost. His first step was to outmanoeuvre his cousin Muhammad Quli Khan and claim the territory of Allahabad. His underlying objective was not only to expand his territorial claim but more so to usurp the relationship between his cousin and the Mughal Prince Ali Gauhar. By removing Muhammad Quli Khan as the prince's lead supporter, Shuja hoped to secure an eminent position within the Mughal government in the near future. In forging an

[8] Ghazi ud-din Khan *Imad ul-Mulk* (1736-1800) was a grandson of Nizam ul-Mulk Asaf Jah, an influential governor in the early eighteenth century who obtained control of the Deccan. Ghazi ud-din appealed to Nawab Saadat Khan for his support and was ultimately appointed as *Mir Bakhshi* (Paymaster General of the Empire) and later *Amir ul-Umra* (Protectorate of the State) by Emperor Ahmad Shah. His official title was known as Ghazi ud-din Khan *Imad ul-Mulk*. See: Thomas W. Beale (1894, 149).

alliance with Ali Gauhar, Shuja ud-Daula took advantage of the bewildered state of mind of the prince, who was living in exile in the provinces.

With Delhi in chaos, Ali Gauhar fled the city after Ghazi ud-din Khan attacked his palace on 19 May 1758 (Sarkar 1991, 7). His own father, emperor Alamgir II (r. 1754-59), 'was intelligent, sober and decorous in life, but utterly wanting in strength of character and capacity for leadership. He used to openly declare himself a puppet in the hands of his *Wazir*, without any power to guide the government' (Sarkar 1991, 3). During his short tenure as emperor, Alamgir II was ineffective as ruler, having relinquished control to Ghazi ud-din Khan who had aligned with the Marathas. As a result, both Ghazi ud-din Khan and the Maratha forces occupied the Shahjahanabad fort and dominated the city of Delhi. Residents of Delhi were constantly under threat of an attack. It was virtually impossible for any sort of Mughal culture and society to continue to thrive under these dire conditions. Aside from the Marathas, Delhi was also the target of Afghan raiders from the north who took the opportunity to attack and pillage the city as well. Gradually, many residents, including courtiers and artists, fled the capital choosing to go to the relatively calm provincial courts.

On arrival in the Mughal provinces, Ali Gauhar relied on his alliance with the provincial leaders to obtain financial and military backing to reclaim Delhi. With the Maratha expansion threatening from the west and the increasing activity by the British East India Company in the east, Ali Gauhar was in a dire predicament. The strategic meetings set up between Ali Gauhar and the provincial leaders of Awadh and Bengal in the late 1750s were to be of historic importance. Ali Gauhar's visit to Awadh in January 1759 was well received by Shuja ud-Daula who was able to provide the prince with full ceremony and festivities to mark the arrival of the leader of the empire (Sarkar 1991, 98). The entourage accompanying the prince and the provincial leaders would have included politicians, officers, attendants, historians and musicians to enable these festivities, as well as artists to document the proceedings. Two of the significant events in this period were the murder of Ali Gauhar's father, Alamgir II by Ghazi ud-din Khan, on 29 November 1759, and the subsequent self-proclamation of Prince Ali Gauhar as Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II on 22 December 1759 in Bihar. One historian (Sarkar 1991, 321) remarked: 'The new emperor whiled away precious days in holding grand ceremonies and coronation rejoicings and lavishly bestowing hyperbolical titles and inflated *mansabs* which had not the remotest change of ever being translated into reality by the engagement of any corresponding military force or grants of fiefs capable of maintaining them.' Not only was his succession important in terms of Mughal history, it

was of vital significance to Awadh, as Shah Alam II recognised Shuja ud-Daula as his *Wazir*. This was the ultimate goal and prize for the Nawab.

For the next several years, Shuja ud-Daula became more absorbed with his political ambition. Together, Shuja ud-Daula and Shah Alam II were concerned with reclaiming Delhi from the Marathas as well as the increased encroachment of the British from the east, but above all their aim was to reassert Mughal power in the region. From 1759 to 1771, Shah Alam II set up his camp near the Allahabad fort from where he launched several attacks on the governors of Bihar and Bengal, who had submitted control of their provinces to the British East India Company. Together with Shuja ud-Daula, they directly targeted the British expansion and fought battles at the cities of Panipat, Patna, Buxar, and Kora from 1761 to 1764. Regrettably for Shuja ud-Daula and the emperor, their defeat to the British at the Battle of Buxar on 23 October 1764 had severe financial and territorial consequences.

Shah Alam II was severely penalised financially; the terms of the Treaty of Allahabad (dated 16 August 1765) would provide the emperor with protection from the East India Company as long as he relinquished his claim and the *diwani* (Head of Revenue Office) of the regions of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. 'This grant meant that the English were legally empowered to take all the revenue surplus of these *subahs*, after deducting twenty-six *lakhs* for the emperor, the expense of the administration of Bengal and the maintenance of the family of the Nawab of Murshidabad (fifty *lakhs*) and the cost of the military defence of these provinces' (Sarkar 1991,326). Shuja ud-Daula suffered a great deal more. The British confiscated the Nawab's control of the regions of Allahabad and nearby Kora and fined him the sum of 50 *lakhs* in order for him to retain his control of Awadh. In signing the Treaty of Allahabad, Shuja had to promise not to make any further claims on territories outside of Awadh. This treaty also permitted the British to conduct free trade in the region and offered their services to protect Awadh's western borders from the Marathas at an additional cost. In September 1773, the British provided Shuja ud-Daula a revised Treaty of Allahabad, and sold him back the regions of Kora and Allahabad for another fifty *lakhs*.

The financial burden of the battles against the British began to take their toll on Shuja ud-Daula. Not only did his involvement take him away from his provincial duties, but it also disrupted the growth of Lucknow and Faizabad. After his loss to the British at Buxar in 1764, Shuja decided to leave Lucknow permanently and settle in Faizabad where he could rebuild his army. However, Shuja was in for a surprise. By early 1765, Faizabad was occupied by the British forces. By March of that year, a General Carnac

'appropriated Shuja's mansion in Faizabad for his personal residence, held court for a month in Nawabi style, and allowed local chiefs and officials to come in and offer obeisance' (Barnett 1980, 45).

By 1765, Faizabad's local residents had already become accustomed to the presence of the French officers, who joined the Nawab's retinue and had settled in the city.[9] One questions how local groups would have received the British soldiers and the news of their occupation of the Nawab's palace. Without historical accounts, it is difficult to obtain an understanding if these foreign mercenaries elicited fear or caused an increased tension within the local community. Although one assumes that the occupation of the province by the British might have been a cause for concern, the artistic tradition of the region did receive the encouragement and patronage from select British and French officers. Several British East India Company officers, including Antoine Polier, Claude Martin, and Richard Johnson as well as the French officer Jean Baptiste Gentil, actively supported local artists, architects, builders, poets and other members of the community.[10] For these Europeans, living in Awadh provided them with a thoroughly captivating lifestyle that also included opportunities to meet and become personally familiar with the Nawab of Awadh. This was something that could not have easily been attained outside of Awadh. The patronage of these men will be discussed at length in the following chapter.

It would have been unrealistic to assume that Awadh would have transpired into a utopian state, whereby the French, British and local inhabitants could co-exist harmoniously in this period. Instead, rivalry between the French and British ultimately led to the East India Company issuing an order that would prevent the Nawab from allowing any French citizen (unless employed by the British East India Company, such as in the case of Claude Martin) to reside in the region and to be involved in private trade. By 1775, the majority of Frenchmen who had been employed by Shuja ud-Daula directly, including Jean Baptiste Gentil, had departed from Awadh.

The untimely death of Shuja ud-Daula in the winter of 1774-75 had an immediate impact on the residents of Faizabad. His eldest son and successor, Asaf ud-

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[9] Shuja ud-Daula allowed deserters of the French *Compagnie des Indes Orientales* to settle in the region, establish private trade, and obtain posts with his army.

[10] Claude Martin (1735-1800), a native of Lyon, France, enlisted with the French army in Pondicherry in 1752. Shortly after arriving, a battle broke out between the French and English forces for control of Pondicherry; Martin shifted his alliance to the English under the condition of 'free company' of French soldiers. During the 1760s and 1770s, Martin was engaged in the capacity of a surveyor for the East India Company in regions such as Bihar, Bengal and Awadh. By 1776, he was the Superintendent of the Nawab's arsenal at Lucknow (Phillimore 1945, 353-54).

Daula, decided to shift the administrative offices of the region from Faizabad back to Lucknow, ceasing the majority of social and cultural activity in Faizabad. The only prominent figure to remain in Faizabad was Shuja ud-Daula's wife and Asaf ud-Daula's mother, Bahu Begum, who remained in Faizabad until her death in 1816.

Asaf ud-Daula, the eldest son of Shuja ud-Daula and Bahu Begum, succeeded in 1775 as the third Nawab of Awadh. Sadly for Awadh, Asaf did not inherit his father's interest in politics. Instead, he focused his efforts on improving the Lucknow skyline by commissioning palaces, religious buildings, and gateways. With his disinterest in politics, the British manipulated control of the region and were quick to build up their forces and sent more troops to monitor Awadh after the French had left. This came at a severe cost to the Nawab who had to cover the costs. To mark the expansion of the British East India Company, an official British Resident was stationed in Lucknow to oversee the administration of the state.[11]

After the death of Asaf ud-Daula in 1797, Nawabi rule began to rapidly decline and was plagued by the interference of the Company. Asaf ud-Daula's death caused various political complications. Prior to his death, Asaf nominated his eldest son Wazir Ali as his successor and heir; the Company accepted this for only a short duration as they were challenged by courtiers in Awadh as well as Asaf's half brother, Sa'adat Ali Khan, regarding Wazir Ali's legitimacy (Fischer 1987, 91). After a thorough 'investigation directed by the Governor-General in person, Wazir Ali was deposed in January 1798 and Sa'adat Ali Khan' succeeded as the fifth Nawab of Awadh on 21 January 1798 (Fischer 1987, 91).

Sa'adat Ali Khan (r. 1798-1814), a keen supporter of the British, was easily misguided by his own greed. During the reign of Asaf ud-Daula, he had lived in exile on a pension of 300,000 rupees, funded by the British (Fischer 1987, 92). After obtaining British support to claim the position of Nawab of Awadh, Sa'adat Ali Khan was forced to relinquish the Allahabad fort as well as 'pay 1,200,000 rupees to the Company for its 'exertions' in putting him in his nephew's place' (Fischer 1987, 92). Although Saadat Ali Khan can be censured for his inability to understand the repercussions of his alliance with the British, his efforts in Awadh do merit attention. Focusing his attention towards the administration of land grants, he was able to increase the revenue of the state, which had dwindled under Asaf ud-Daula's personal spending habits and the costs of the alliance between Awadh and the East India Company. Awadh

[11] John Bristow was sent to Lucknow in 1777 as the first British Resident.

continued to prosper during the reign of Saadat Ali Khan's successor, Ghazi ud-Din Haidar (r. 1814-27). However, the British took advantage of Awadh's profits and used the funds to finance their own wars such as the first Burmese War (1823-24). British influence also led Ghazi ud-Din Haidar to terminate his relationship and subservience to the Mughal Empire and to assume the title of King of Awadh (Mohan 1997, 114).

During the last 29 years of rule, the Kings of Awadh became increasingly dependent on the British and the state would become a puppet state of the Company. Ghazi ud-Din Haidar's successors, Nasir ud-din Haidar (r. 1827-37), Muhammad Ali Shah (r. 1837-42), Amjad Ali Shah (r. 1842-47), and Wajid Ali Shah (r. 1847-56), took advantage of the state treasury, building extravagant palaces and furnishing their homes with all the luxuries available to them from within India and from the west. In effect, Awadh was no longer able to support the Kings of Awadh, and Wajid Ali Shah sold the province to the British in 1856. After signing the treaty that permitted the British to annex Awadh, Wajid Ali Shah immediately left Lucknow and moved to Calcutta where he received a pension from the East India Company.

1. Urbanization of the cities of Faizabad and Lucknow

Without the aspirations of the rulers of Awadh, the cities of Faizabad and Lucknow would not have been able to prosper from their agrarian roots into leading centres of political and social activity, as they were to become by the late eighteenth century. This section will review the urbanisation efforts by the eighteenth century Nawabs of Awadh, with particular emphasis on their contributions towards creating an independent Nawabi style of architecture.

Faizabad is situated immediately east of the city of Lucknow, along the Ghagra River (figure 4). Faizabad was selected as the location for Saadat Khan's capital in 1722, flourishing further under Safdar Jang and even during the second half of Shuja ud-Daula's reign during the years 1764-75. Lucknow, located along the banks of the Gumti River and west of Faizabad, was also a strategic military base and a second capital of Awadh. In light of Safdar Jang's death in 1754, Shuja ud-Daula shifted the administration of the province from Faizabad to Lucknow. However, after Shuja's defeat at the Battle of Buxar in 1764, the Nawab opted to retreat from Lucknow and settle in Faizabad for the duration of his reign. After Shuja ud-Daula's death in 1775, Asaf ud-Daula returned to Lucknow, which continued to be the base for the Nawabi

court through the mid-nineteenth century. It is these two cities that play a central role in the formation of the late Mughal painting tradition in Awadh.

Surprisingly, while Mughal political affairs played a fundamental role in the politics of Awadh from the sixteenth century onwards, cultural influences and visible artistic connections between the capital and the province were short-lived. During the early phase of Mughal influence in the late sixteenth century, the Mughals passed their knowledge of city planning. The Mughals divided the region south of the major thoroughfare, known as the *chauk* or *chowk*, into distinct quarters or *mohallas* (Sharma 1959, 144). In the subsequent years, the development of Lucknow fell into the hands of the subadars of Awadh who founded numerous *mohallas*, including Mahmudnagar, Rani Katra, Fazilnagar and Shahganj, as well as many others (Sharma 1959, 144-46). In tribute to Akbar, the Mughals also erected a major gateway in the southern part of town, known as the Akbari Darwaza (Sharma 1959, 34). Although it is difficult to state with certainty the style of architecture that was used in developing these new sites and features, there is one landmark that still stands testament to the vestige of Mughal influence.[12] The Nadan Mahal (c. 1600), the tomb of Shaikh Abdur Rahim, 'is a fine building in the Mughal style, faced in red sandstone from Agra with vigorous carved detail' (Davies 1989, 244) (figure 5). The usage of the Mughal idiom does reflect the close connection between the subadar of Awadh and the Mughal government. In the century that followed, this close association between the province and the capital rapidly diminished. The only other landmark to have been commissioned for a member of the imperial family was the Aurangzeb Mosque, to mark Emperor Aurangzeb's (r. 1658-1707) fleeting visit to the region.

By the seventeenth century, the cities of Faizabad and Lucknow began to shift from agrarian communities to urbanised developments. Prior to the period of Nawabi rule, the Shaikhzadas (the prevailing *subadars* of Awadh), initiated urbanisation efforts in Lucknow by erecting fortresses and private residences; most of these, however, were constructed out of temporary materials such as mud and brick that would not last through the eighteenth century. During the subsequent period of Shaikhzada rule, Rahman's descendents were credited with erecting the Macchi Bhawan fortress, the Panch Mahalla palace, a private residence known as the Mubarak Mahal, and a gateway called the Shaikhan Darwaza (Sharar 1994, 39). The insignia of the Shaikhzada family, the fish motif, that was prevalently displayed on the entrance to the Macchi Bhawan

[12] The Archaeological Survey of India refers to this tomb as the Nadam Mahal. See: M. H. Kuraishi (1932, 40).

was later appropriated by the Nawabs of Awadh and used on the façades of Nawabi period buildings such as the Jawab Gateway in Lucknow (figure 6).

Under the influence of the Nawabs of Awadh, Faizabad and Lucknow would slowly burgeon into two of the leading provincial Mughal cities, attracting visitors from across the continent. Historian C.A. Bayly (1992, 116-17) explains that, through the urbanization of these cities and by erecting new palaces, fortresses, religious institutions as well as bazaars, the Nawabs of Awadh were able to establish their personal authority and assert power over the inhabitants of the region. It was essential for the Nawabs of Awadh to mark the territory where they would 'be completely dominant and could exercise authority without the rivalry of shades of the dead or the envious living', visually defining their lands, as the Mughals had done before them (Bayly 1992, 116-17).

Although Saadat Khan was primarily embroiled in Delhi politics, he can be merited with selecting the undeveloped area of Faizabad as the capital of Awadh, and erecting an unnamed fortress constructed out of mud that accommodated his artillery, cavalry and stables (Sharar 1994, 30). Inside this fortress, Saadat Khan constructed a personal bungalow, also composed of mud, simply known as the *Bangla*. Saadat Khan also commissioned a second residence of more stable material, known as Dilkusha, which was later inhabited and extended by both Safdar Jang and Shuja ud-Daula.[13] Although it is unknown exactly what architectural styles these buildings followed, it is very likely that Saadat Khan followed the Mughal idiom as he had spent the majority of his life in the capital. Further evidence of his knowledge of Mughal designs was visible in the gardens of Faizabad, which were commissioned in the Persian style *char-bagh* that had been adapted by the Mughals and utilised in the imperial capitals at Lahore, Agra and Delhi.

Deposing the Shaikhzada family in Lucknow, Saadat Khan appropriated their land holdings and the private residences that they had painstakingly built. Khan immediately took over the Macchi Bhawan fort and directly 'rented' the buildings inside, including the Panch Mahalla and Mubarak Mahal for the sum of Rs. 565 a month (Sharma 1959, 393). Taking over the Macchi Bhawan complex from the Shaikhzadas, Safdar Jang spent his finances to extend the complex. However, it is unclear exactly what changes and additions were made, as there is a lacuna of historical documentation and visual evidence.

[13] This building is no longer extant.

Analysing the available evidence, it can be said that Safdar Jang was more active in transforming the landscape of Faizabad as compared to his predecessor. While the layout of the city of Lucknow had received Mughal attention in the sixteenth century, Safdar Jang and his army planned the design of Faizabad and allocated lands for elaborate gardens. He was also instrumental in erecting the Delhi Gate, a grandiose entrance to the western side of the city. Jang's desire to urbanise the Faizabad region was met with a great accolade by his leading courtiers, such as Maharaja Newal Rai (deputy to Safdar Jang) who would follow in Jang's footsteps and construct a private residential complex along the Saryu River. In developing the region, Jang can also be credited for his efforts in urbanisation outside the centre of Faizabad and erecting forts in locations such as Dhopap (on the Gumti River) and at Jalalabad (figure 7) (Tandan 2001, 75).

In urbanising the region, Saadat Khan and Safdar Jang modelled their new buildings and additions on the style of Mughal Delhi, a style that they aspired to imitate and would effectively display their own position within the empire. It was not until the arrival of Shuja ud-Daula and Asaf ud-Daula that Faizabad and Lucknow began to exhibit a new style of architecture that would become classified as the 'Nawabi' style. It is this unique style of architecture, an eccentric hybrid of western and Mughal styles, which would become exclusive primarily to Lucknow and act as a permanent reminder to present day visitors and the local inhabitants of the cultural vestige of the once flourishing Nawabi court.

Under the guidance of Shuja ud-Daula and Asaf ud-Daula, these cities quickly saw the formation of new palace complexes, gateways, mosques, *madrasas*, as well as bazaars that would become the epicentre of commercial activity. By spending their personal fortunes, these buildings would symbolise their wealth, their status within the Mughal hierarchy, and their independent position in the provinces. Unlike paintings, these architectural delights would not only be witnessed by local inhabitants, but would attract individuals from across the subcontinent and further a field. Not surprisingly, residents from within the province and as far as Delhi were the earliest to populate these centres.

As the new governor of Awadh, one of Shuja ud-Daula's first projects was to erect a funerary monument or tomb for his father Safdar Jang (figure 8). His decision to build the funerary complex in Delhi, instead of Lucknow or Faizabad, clearly reflected the close bond between his father and the Mughals. This idea is further validated by Shuja's choice in architect and style of architecture. In 1754, the architect Sidi Balal

Mohammad designed an elaborate funerary monument in the Mughal style that reflected the style of Emperor Humayun's tomb also in Delhi. Entering through a gateway, the architect planted gardens and a water channel that lead directly to the mausoleum. Composed of red sandstone, the tomb is 'set on a high podium, the mausoleum is topped by a high bulbous dome with four corner polygonal towers inlaid with marble' (Davies 1989, 133). While Shuja ud-Daula used his wealth to erect an extravagant funerary monument to commemorate his father, a landmark still extant and visible in Delhi, his own mausoleum in Faizabad is in a state of disrepair.

During the first half of his reign, Shuja ud-Daula concentrated his efforts to transform the vista of Lucknow and immediately began to expand the Macchi Bhawan complex. Inside, it is believed that Shuja ud-Daula expanded the Panch Mahalla pavilion and erected the Panch Mahalla gateway (figure 9) (Llewellyn-Jones 2006, 32-34). In the following photograph, taken approximately in 1858 in the aftermath of the Uprising of 1857, the remains of both the Macchi Bhawan and the Panch Mahalla gateway is visible (figure 10). In Lucknow, in order to alleviate himself and his family from the summer heat, he erected a *ba'oli* or 'an elaborate step well with interlinking passages and subterranean apartments used during the hot weather' (Llewellyn-Jones 1985, 255). Due to the extent of damage suffered during battles of 1857, the Macchi Bhawan fortress and the buildings inside the complex are no longer in existence as they had to be demolished in the nineteenth century. The *ba'oli,* however, can still be visited today and is part of the Bara Imambara complex erected by Asaf ud-Daula.

Shuja ud-Daula's attention to the urbanisation of Lucknow was not well received by western travellers. In 1764, the French Jesuit missionary, Father Joseph Tieffenthaler, commented on the scene in Lucknow: 'there are a great number of brick houses, but the majority are of lime or mortar covered with tiles, standing on little mounds of barren land, here and there. The greatest part of the town extends towards the east, and covers an elevated place; the smallest part is a gorge. The streets are narrow and stinking, because the inhabitants habitually throw all their refuse into the streets' (Llewellyn-Jones 1985, 11). Tieffenthaler's memoirs not only provide one of the earliest western descriptions of the fledgling city, but also provided a rudimentary map of the city as well as illustrations of the façades of palaces of Shuja ud-Daula erected along the Gumti River (figure 11). Approximately 10 years later, another French visitor, Comte de Mondav, remarked: 'Laknau is a large and nasty town... unremarkable except for one building... the palace of the nabab on the river bank' (Llewellyn-Jones 1985, 12). It is important for the reader to note that these disparaging accounts were written in

a period in which the Nawab was heavily involved in protecting his province from invasion and at a time when he spent the majority of his time away from Lucknow.

Shuja ud-Daula's efforts in expanding Lucknow were cut short by his defeat by the British at the Battle of Buxar, which forced him to relocate to Faizabad in 1764. Although Shuja suffered a huge financial loss which injured his pride, the local inhabitants still supported their Nawab and followed him to Faizabad. The historian Sharar (1994, 31) commented: 'As soon it was known that Shuja ud-Daula had decided on Faizabad for his headquarters, crowds flocked in that direction... the entire population of Shahjahanabad [Delhi] seemed to be making preparations to move there... In no time persons of every race and creed, literary men, soldiers, merchants, craftsmen, individuals of every rank and class had gathered there'. On arrival in Faizabad, the Nawab was 'was bent upon the prosperity and growth of the city, it seemed Faizabad should soon rival Delhi. As there was no potentate in any country living in such splendid style as he, and as people here saw wealth, rank, and lavish diffusion of money in every street and market, artisans and scholars flocked hither from Dhaka, Bengal...etc' (Bakhsh 1888, 9).

In urbanising Faizabad, architects were commissioned to construct palaces and design beautiful gardens. 'Marketplaces and bazaars rapidly crept up also alongside the main thoroughfares of the town, with stalls selling delicacies such as *kebabs*, *faluda*, sherbets, and *chapattis*' (Sharar 1994, 33). As part of the city planning process, Shuja ud-Daula also incorporated his passion for gardens and hunting by establishing several large planned gardens, following Persian conventions, as well as a game reserve stocked with animals. One of these elaborate gardens was located within the Gulabbari complex, where Shuja ud-Daula later constructed a mausoleum that would be used to inter his own body after his death (Tandan 2001, 55-56).

In Faizabad, Shuja ud-Daula selected a prime location along the banks of the Saryu River to construct his principal residence, known as the 'Nawab's Palace'. Although the Nawab's palace is no longer extant, at least two western artists visually documented a panoramic view of the palace, from across the Saryu River. The French Jesuit priest Joseph Tieffenthaler was an amateur artist who illustrated the façade of the building and made sketches of the ornate carved doorways. William Hodges, who visited Faizabad in the years following Shuja ud-Daula's death, prepared at least two studies of the Nawab's palace in the 1780s (figure 12). Hodges' diary recorded his impression of the palace complex. He wrote: '[it] is a vast building, covering a great extent of the ground, having several areas or courts, many separate buildings in them.

The grand entrance to the palace is through a large and handsome gate, the superstructure of which was a place of arms, and there is still a guard kept in it' (Tandan 2001, 83).

The aforementioned buildings erected by Shuja ud-Daula traditionally followed the Mughal style of architecture consistent with the building activities of his predecessors. However, it is during this period that the 'Nawabi' style of architecture emerged. This style of architecture, which exhibited an eclectic mélange of western and Mughal forms, arose in the region as a result of European-style buildings that were erected not only by European inhabitants such as Polier and Claude Martin, but also under the direction of the later Nawabs of Awadh. While Martin's contributions, including his palatial residence Constantia, and his country house Bibiapur Kothi are well known, it was very likely that it was in fact Antoine Polier who was the forerunner in the development of this style. While modern day scholars have yet to examine fully Polier's position as the Chief Architect and Engineer as appointed by the East India Company to Shuja ud-Daula's court in Faizabad, it is very likely that the European style buildings that appeared in the late 1760s and early 1770s can be attributed to Polier's designs.

The *Calendar of Persian Correspondence* (CPC) (1911) provides a glimpse into Polier's assignment to Faizabad. It is recorded that, in February 1773, the Governor General Warren Hastings responded to Shuja ud-Daula's request for the 'services of a thoroughly qualified English engineer for erecting fortifications in the Nawab's capital' (CPC 1911, note 184). Hastings offered the services of Major Polier 'who is an expert Engineer' and 'hoped that the Nawab will find him satisfactory in every way' (CPC, 1911 note 252). Aside from providing the Nawab with assistance in Faizabad, according to Polier's letters (2001) it is implied that the Nawab requested Polier to come to the Nawab's camps in order to solicit military advice. Of course the British were horrified by Polier's actions and felt that Polier was 'defecting' to the Nawab's service. In May 1774, Shuja ud-Daula received a letter stating that 'Major Polier who was sent to the Nawab by the Company for supervising the construction of his buildings at Fyzabad, has been employed on field service. As other loyal officers under the Nawab dislike this arrangement, advises him that he should either engage the major in the work for which his services were lent or send him back to Calcutta' (CPC 1911, note 1022).

Searching through Polier's correspondence, one hopes to discover details regarding the buildings or structures that Polier, in his capacity of engineer and architect to the Nawab, may have designed. The only relevant letter, composed en route to

Faizabad, expressed his concern in obtaining suitable accommodations for himself and his extended family. While the Nawab kindly offered Polier the *haveli* of Basant Khan in 1773, Polier was dissatisfied with its condition as it offered no privacy and the roof was still incomplete (Polier 2001, fol. 12a). Instead, it seemed that Polier hired a local builder to erect four houses with concrete platforms on a new plot of land, possibly through a *jagir* or land grant bestowed by the Nawab (Polier 2001, fol. 24b). Unfortunately, Polier's correspondence was vague and did not clarify the style of architecture to be used for these new residences.

As Polier's official post was in the capacity of Chief Architect and Engineer to Shuja ud-Daula, it was very likely that he designed residences or fortifications for the Nawab. Reviewing the available visual materials, including Polier's drawings and mid-nineteenth century photographs, there are two buildings, Dilkusha and Asafi Kothi, which show evidence of European influence and can be attributed to Polier. From photographs of Dilkusha in Faizabad, it is apparent that the architectural design incorporated western styles including ionic columns and rounded arches, both atypical of the local style (figure 13) (figure 14). A second residence commissioned by Asaf ud-Daula, known as the Asafi Kothi, also exhibited the awareness of European forms; its 'façades are defined by rows of round-headed arches with scalloped borders and supported by clusters of four, gigantic, three-quarter fluted columns of a Composite Order. Its design is symptomatic of those European houses then being commissioned in Awadh whose classical framework had been adapted for Indian conditions (figure 15)' (Tandan 2001, 105). Architectural historian Neeta Das believed that the design of this extravagant building should be attributed to either Antoine Polier or Claude Martin (Llewellyn-Jones 2006, 170).

Shuja ud-Daula's death in 1775 brought forth momentous change for the residents of Faizabad. Following the death of his father, Asaf ud-Daula found it 'difficult to establish his personal authority in Faizabad where the city was dominated by the vast households of the two famous Begums of Awadh, respectively the wife and sister of his father, and relocated to Lucknow' (Bayly 1992, 117). With the Nawabi court relocating to Lucknow, Asaf ud-Daula's courtiers as well as the British officers had to follow suit. However, Faizabad was not completely abandoned. Asaf ud-Daula's mother, Bahu Begum, remained in Faizabad. It was only after her death in 1816, that the city was completely abandoned and deteriorated. Today, the only trace of the Nawabi period that remains is the mausoleum of Shuja ud-Daula and that of his wife Bahu Begum.

As Lucknow had been abandoned for the last ten years, Asaf ud-Daula invested his energy towards renovating and rebuilding the city. Although Asaf is generally criticised for his disinterest in politics, he was instrumental in developing the region. Asaf lavished his personal finances to re-design the landscape of Lucknow and to look after the welfare of his residents. During the famine of 1784, he commissioned a local architect to design a new religious complex: the Bara Imambara. Local residents were hired as labourers and received supplies of food instead of a pay check. The historian Sharar (1994, 47) stated that the construction of the Bara Imambara was started in order to 'alleviate the sufferings of a population' and would pull them from the famine.

Designed by the architect Kifayat-ullah, the Bara Imambara was the ultimate funerary monument for the followers of the Shia tradition of Islam (figure 16). At the Imambara, Shias would be able to commemorate the lives of the three Imams - Hussain, Hassan and Ali - during the month and festival of Muharram. The entrance to the complex was approached through a magnificent gateway called the Rumi Darwaza (figure 17). This splendid example of Nawabi architecture was modelled on the Porte Sublime in Constantinople. After walking through the Rumi Darwaza, visitors would enter a forecourt, pass through a second gateway, and enter the main courtyard that opened to the Bara Imambara itself. In 1794, Asaf ud-Daula commissioned an impressive mosque known as the Asafi Mosque (figure 18) next to the Bara Imambara. At the time of Asaf ud-Daula's death in 1797, his body was interred inside the Imambara.

Contemporary visitors to Lucknow are still able to see the fruits of Asaf ud-Daula's labour and patronage. While the Rumi Darwaza, Bara Imambara and the Asafi Mosque have become popular tourist attractions, there were other structures commissioned by Asaf during his twenty-two year reign. North-west of the Macchi Bhawan fortress, Asaf erected an elaborate palace complex known as the Daulat Khana ('House of Wealth'), which contained smaller residences including the Asafi Kothi or 'House of Asaf', the Gol Kothi or 'Round House', and a building known today as the 'Picture Gallery'. While all three structures were built in approximately 1789, both the Asafi Kothi and the Gol Kothi were influenced by 'European tastes' and have been attributed to the work of Antoine Polier or Claude Martin (figure 15) (Llewellyn-Jones 2006, 170).

Whilst it is difficult to trace or locate buildings designed by Polier, his contemporary Claude Martin is today recognised for the unique country houses he erected in the region. During the late eighteenth century, Martin engaged in commercial

trade and turned into a successful businessman. In the 1780s, Martin constructed two smaller residences: Farhat Bakhsh and Bibiapur Kothi (figure 19). These two structures were modelled on the French neo-classical style. More importantly, Martin is credited for building a monumental palace named Constantia; this edifice has left an everlasting mark on the Lucknow skyline (figure 20). In the memoirs of Viscount Valentina, Constantia was described as (Llewellyn-Jones 2006, 225):

> A strange, fantastical building of every species of architecture and adorned with minute stucco fretwork, enormous red lions with lamps instead of eyes... It has a handsome effect at a distance, from a lofty tower in the centre with four turrets but on a nearer approach, the wretched taste of the ornaments only excites contempt. A more extraordinary combination of Gothic towers, and Grecian pilasters, I believe, was never before devised.

Although the development of Constantia was started in 1796, Martin passed away before it was completed. In his will, Martin stipulated that the building should be transformed into a school; since the mid-nineteenth century, it has been known as La Martinière School for Boys.

2. Patronage of decorative and fine arts

The visual evidence of the existing architectural edifices today is a reminder of the patronage bestowed by the Nawabs of Awadh in the eighteenth century. As compared to the fine and decorative arts, architecture has always been a more powerful and public form of art. By erecting these monumental landmarks, Shuja ud-Daula and Asaf ud-Daula defined a new architectural style that would be identifiable with Lucknow (rather than Faizabad). It was this new hybrid style of architecture that would be respected and mimicked by the successive Nawabs of Awadh in the nineteenth century. While architecture provides a visual reminder of the legacy of the Nawabi period for the general public, the fine arts including painting and calligraphy were only consumed and accessible by the cultural elite.

It is exceedingly rare to find historical narratives on the administration of the Awadhi court, particularly regarding court rituals such as the meetings between the Nawab and his subjects. One questions exactly what type of environment these early rulers cultivated and why their cities attracted individuals from across the subcontinent. One cannot help but wonder what the Nawabs offered in terms of patronage in order to allure the fine and literary artists to their courts.

Artistic patronage bestowed by the Nawabs in the eighteenth century is a topic yet to be examined at length. From the architectural splendour of the extant palaces, fortresses, mosques and gateways in the cities of Lucknow and Faizabad, we become explicitly conscious of Nawabi efforts during this early period. However, when turning to the fine and literary arts as well as classical dance and music, there is limited scholarship. In most instances, scholars (Sharar 1994) have overlooked eighteenth century patronage in favour of the nineteenth century. The reasoning behind such a decision is that there is lack of information on the benevolence of the eighteenth century Nawabs of Awadh in terms of official court records, historical accounts, and narratives written by visitors to Awadh.

The autobiographical account of the poet Mir Muhammad Taqi 'Mir' (1723-1810) provides one of the rare and insightful narratives on the politics and the social interactions in the cities of Delhi and Lucknow during the late eighteenth century. Mir's prose is greatly important as it offers readers a first hand account of the opulent nature of Asaf ud-Daula's reign. Mir's account of Asaf ud-Daula's lavish reception of Warren Hastings during a visit to Lucknow in 1784 is noteworthy. Mir (2002, 121-22) wrote:

> Here [in Lucknow], the Wazir [Asaf ud-Daula], the benevolent noble, set out to receive with honours the Governor [General] Bahadur, who was coming from Calcutta at the invitation of [the Nawab], and who is the overlord of all this land. At every stage of the journey, a new and different feast was offered: new tents; elegant meals; Turkish and Arab horses; towering elephants; trays of precious robes and jewels; delightful drinks; various fruits of the best kind; fine gifts of local specialties; southern and western swords and bows from Chach. When they entered Lucknow, his [Asaf ud-Daula] permanent abode, and took residence in the royal palace, new carpets of manifold hues were laid out every day, with golden incense burners placed on their corners. Velveteen carpets were spread out such as none had ever stepped upon. Walls glittered like silver. Elegant pavilions were set in gardens and decorated with screens and curtains. At night, there were dances by women who were like fairies- nay, who were like the houris of paradise. Flower vases of crystal and porcelain were carefully arranged. Shelves and niches in the walls were filled with choice fruit, perfectly ripe. In the evening, they had elaborate illuminations and set of fireworks. The starbursts and rockets touched the sky. The sight of the illuminations stole the hearts [of the spectators].

Judging from Mir's account, Lucknow had developed into a hedonistic paradise that offered visitors and inhabitants a wide array of luxuries and entertainment. By the late eighteenth century local artisans were already producing exquisite decorative objects made of glass and *bidri* ware including *huqqa* bases and vases. Craftsmen were also carving fine wooden doors and windows to ornament the new buildings in the region. According to the United Provinces Gazetteer, 'There is but little wood carving now in the district, although in former days the industry must have flourished, judging from the finely carved doors in Fyzabad and elsewhere, frequently adorned with the fish crest, the emblem of the Oudh Nawab Wazirs' (Nevill 1905, 44). Aside from decorative arts, artisans also developed a new style of embroidery called *chikan.* Using white thread, intricate patterns and designs were embroidered onto cotton or muslin fabrics in different colours. *Chikan* embroidery, applied to saris and other garments, remains to this day as one of the leading products from the region.

Aside from craftsmen, Awadh attracted poets and calligraphers. The work of these literary artists was highly esteemed and sought after by both the Mughal elite as well as the Nawabs of Awadh. Calligraphers were reputed for their ability to delicately inscribe passages from the Qu'ran, Persian narratives and mystical verses in the *nasta'liq* script. Specimens of calligraphy were often pasted into folios decorated with illuminated margins and bound into albums. In countless albums belonging to the Mughals, passages were often placed in the reverse of miniature paintings (Schimmel, Welch, and Swietochowski 1987). Leading calligraphers that flourished in Awadh during the 1760s include Munshi Muhammad Ali, Hafiz Muhammad Ibrahim,

Muhammad Abbas, Hafiz Said ud Din, Munshi Nazir Hamid, Munshi Abdul Majid and Hafiz Nur Allah (Sharar 1994, 102-08). Of these calligraphers, it is the work of Hafiz Nur Allah that is frequently found in albums commissioned by European patrons such as Antoine Polier.

The evidence of new architectural delights, decorative arts objects furnishing the palaces, as well as examples of calligraphy and new poetry, clearly implies that there was a necessity for skilled workers and poets, who would be funded by the Nawabs of Awadh and the elite courtiers. In the case of Awadhi painting, there is simply not enough information to determine if the early Nawabs established personal ateliers, if they only commissioned specific paintings, or even directly sat for portraits.

Prior to discussing the evidence of Nawabi patronage it is of the utmost necessity to clarify the correct terminology to classify paintings produced in this region. Scholars have tended to refer to works produced in Awadh as 'provincial' Mughal paintings, as to associate them directly to their place of production, i.e. the Mughal province of Awadh. However, this usage of 'provincial' is ambiguous and has a negative connotation as it implies that these works were not of the same calibre as the works produced in the 'imperial' workshops in Allahabad, Kabul and Delhi during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In general, the usage of the term 'Mughal' or 'imperial Mughal' painting refers to the tradition of painting practised at the Mughal courts that showed a combination of the Persian Safavid style and the pre-existing indigenous Hindu style. This style of painting was formalised under the patronage of Mughal emperor Akbar and is traditionally associated with the imperial rulers Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan. However, in the late seventeenth and during the eighteenth century, the Mughal style did flourish in Delhi, though on a reduced scale. The 'provincial' Mughal style emerged in the first half of the eighteenth century as a result of the decline in Mughal authority in Delhi and the dispersal of Mughal artists from the capital to the provinces of Awadh and Bengal. As compared to the grand scale of imperial workshops in Kabul and Delhi during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it is unknown exactly the extent of the workshops that flourished in cities such as Faizabad and Lucknow during the eighteenth century.

Art historians Gauvin Bailey, Navina Haidar and Stuart Cary Welch typically refer to paintings from this region as either 'provincial Mughal' or specially 'provincial Mughal from Awadh' (Akimishkin 1996). However, this terminology does lead readers to incorrectly assume that Awadhi paintings were not as sophisticated as Mughal paintings from the same period. Scholars including Mildred Archer (1981), Linda Leach

(1995), J.P. Losty (2002), and Robert Skelton (1959) more commonly refer to paintings from this region by the location of production instead. Thus it becomes necessary that scholars systematise a convention that would provide an accurate description of paintings from the region. In this thesis, the phrase 'provincial' will not imply the lack of sophistication, but rather be used to make the connection between the imperial state and the province. Therefore it would be more accurate to use the terms 'later' Mughal painting or Awadhi painting.

Searching for evidence of Nawabi patronage during the reigns of Saadat Khan and Safdar Jang has been fruitless. As of this date, there are no loose paintings or illustrated manuscripts produced in the region that bear the seal of Saadat Khan or Safdar Jang, which could help pinpoint the date of production and where they were produced. In addition, individual portraits of Saadat Khan are exceedingly rare; more often he is portrayed accompanying Muhammad Shah (figure 21). Contemporary portraits of Safdar Jang are also uncommon (figure 22). Though, during the second half of the eighteenth century, Awadhi artists would base their portraits of the early Nawabs on pre-existing examples.

In light of the instability of the Mughal government during the mid-eighteenth century, artists would have had no option but to leave Delhi in order to subsist. In this turbulent period, Nadir Shah invaded Delhi in 1739 and Ahmad Shah Abdali (Shah Durrani), the Afghan ruler, raided the capital several times in the 1750s. In 1760, the poet Mir (2002, 84-86) commented on one of the raids:

> In the morning - which was like the morning of Doomsday - the armies of the Shah [Shah Durrani] and the Rohilla [Najib-ud-Daulah] poured in and set about looting and killing. They knocked down doors of the houses and tied up the owners, and some they burned while others they beheaded. All this carnage continued for seven or eight days. Thousands of wretches, in the midst of that raging fire, scarred their hearts with the mark of exile and ran off into the wilderness and like lamps at dawn, died in the cold air-while the blackguards tied up innumerable defenceless people with their ropes and dragged them off to their own camps. It was a reign of tyrants.

Mir's observation clearly illustrated the dire situation in Delhi; it would have been virtually impossible for any individual affiliated to the Mughal court including artists to remain in the capital. As the Mughal court was closely affiliated to the provincial court at Lucknow and within a short distance from Delhi, it would have been ideal for artists to relocate to the region. Whilst there is evidence of Delhi artists reappearing in Lucknow in the 1760s and 1770s, there is no written proof that Shuja ud-Daula encouraged artists to relocate. It can simply be suggested that there was a general shift

of artists as well as courtiers and residents from the capital to the province. In all probability, the shift from Delhi to Awadh may have been sparked by the following historical events. The death of Safdar Jang, in 1754, prompted Shuja ud-Daula to travel between Awadh and Delhi in order to monitor the construction of his father's tomb in Delhi. In the winter of 1758-59, Ali Gauhar and his entourage fled from Delhi in fear of an assassination attempt. Hearing of Shuja ud-Daula and Ali Gauhar's move to the provinces, the residents of the capital may have mirrored their decision.

Nonetheless, it is during Shuja ud-Daula's reign that a tradition of painting – rooted in the imperial Mughal style – began to flourish in the cities of Lucknow and Faizabad. Leach (1995; Llewellyn-Jones 2006, 616) credits Shuja ud-Daula as the instigator of the Awadhi painting tradition. However, as previously mentioned, without clear inscriptions or written documentation, this claim cannot be substantiated.

One of the illustrated volumes commissioned by Jean Baptiste Gentil during his time in Faizabad does imply that Shuja ud-Daula was involved with local artists. According to a handwritten inscription in one album, Gentil noted that artists including Nevasi Lal and Mohan Singh, were in the service of *'Nabob Visir Soudjaatdaula Gouverneur General des provinces d'Eléabad et d'Avad'.*[14] Shuja's role as a patron of arts is further substantiated through letters by Antoine Polier (2001), who refers to his artist Mihr Chand as the 'painter of the *sarkar*'. In translating '*sarkar*', Polier could have either been referring to the 'province' of Awadh or the 'Nawab' of Awadh.

To identify Shuja ud-Daula as a major patron, there needs to the evidence of commissioned works including portrait studies or even illustrations documenting historical events such as the Nawab in battle or welcoming Shah Alam II. After conducting a thorough investigation of known paintings from Awadh, a masterpiece picturing 'Nawab Shuja ud-Daula surrounded by his courtiers during the spring festival of *Holi* and enjoying a musical performance' by the artist Gobind Singh (*amal-i gobind singh shaquin*) should be considered as one of the most significant works from this period. Recently discovered in a private collection, Gobind Singh's work has never before been published or mentioned (figure 23).[15] In this exquisite terrace scene, the Nawab is seated underneath a *shamiyana,* reclining against a bolster, and smoking from

[14] This will be discussed at length in Chapter 2. The 'Gentil Album' (1774), Victoria & Albert Museum, IS 25-1980 (1-58). Gentil wrote: *'Névasilal, Mounsingue, etc. au service du Nabob Visir Soudjaatdaula Gouverneur general des provinces d'Eléabad et d'Avad.'* [Nevasi Lal, Mohan Singh, etc. in the service of Nawab Vizir Shuja ud-Daula Governor General of the provinces of Allahabad and Awadh.]

[15] I am extremely grateful to the collector who has shared with me Gobind Singh's work and permitted me to use this in my thesis.

a hookah. Shuja's courtiers, seated in a v-shaped formation, join him in celebrating *Holi*. Each courtier has in front of him a hookah and a tray of red powder. Directly behind Shuja, a further five men are positioned standing on the left side of the terrace. While the activities on the terrace take centre stage, the artist included a silvery lake and the distant vista including a white marble palace and rolling hills dotted with a procession of officers.

From Gobind Singh's work, we become aware of the physiognomy and visage of the Nawab, including his robust figure, drooping moustache, and light beard. These exact features appear in Shuja's portraits by Gobind Singh's contemporaries including Mir Kalan Khan. In Gobind Singh's portrait, there are two other individuals that need to be identified, as they appear in several other Awadhi paintings. Placed immediately opposite Shuja ud-Daula, the artist portrayed a rotund young man that can be easily identified (through later studies by Mihr Chand and a portrait by Mir Kalan Khan) as Asaf ud-Daula. The second figure worth noting is the heavily bearded man standing directly behind the Nawab and holding a flywhisk over his head. This figure, yet to be identified, appears in at least two other works.[16] In the National Museum in Delhi, there is a portrait of Shuja ud-Daula with two courtiers that is incorrectly identified by Daljeet (1999) as 'Sultan Asaf ud-Daula' (figure 24). While Shuja ud-Daula's visage is readily recognisable, the heavily bearded courtier standing before Shuja is the same courtier who appeared in Gobind Singh's work. This courtier appears a third time in a painting by Nidha Mal. In 'New Year's tributes', he appears to be sitting in a window in the upper section of the palace. Leach (1995; Llewellyn-Jones 2006, 689) identifies him as 'an unidentified aristocrat who must have been Shuja ud-Daula's lieutenant or possibly one of the several rivals surrounding him who contended for his title'. Finding multiple portraits of this individual, one questions if this courtier was a major patron in the region. Nonetheless, without an inscription to identify this man, it becomes difficult to follow this lead.

Returning to Gobind Singh's work momentarily, it is worth discussing the subject of the painting. As Shuja ud-Daula was a Muslim, one immediately questions his participation in the Hindu festival. Though within the Mughal tradition, it was not uncommon for Mughal rulers to celebrate *Holi*; both Jahangir and Muhammad Shah have been illustrated celebrating *Holi*. Aside from the well-known portrait by

[16] Researching portraits of the leading courtiers of the Awadhi court including Raja Newal Rai, as of yet there is no similar portrait of the man pictured in these studies. There is the possibility that there are further studies of this individual that may offer clarification on his position within the Awadhi court and his idenity.

Govardhan picturing 'Jahangir celebrating *Holi*', Jahangir memoirs indicate that he contemplated the meaning of the festivities (Thackston 1999, 147). Jahangir wrote 'on the eve of this day, they light fires in all the lanes and streets, when it is day light they spray powder on each other's heads and faces' (Thackston 1999, Llewellyn-Jones 2006, 147). Perhaps Shuja ud-Daula's indulgence in the Hindu festival can be viewed as his acceptance of the religion of the majority of the population in the province of Awadh.

Aside from Gobind Singh's illustration of Shuja ud-Daula with his courtiers, there are few known portrait studies of the Nawab that date to the first years of his reign. The portrait in the National Museum in Delhi has been published with the date of circa 1750. Although the Nawab is pictured as a slim and youthful man, it is difficult to accept that it was produced prior to his succession without an inscription or seal to confirm the date. Instead, the portrait should be assigned to the first half of his reign, from circa 1754 to 1765. In Paris, there is a full-length portrait study of Shuja ud-Daula standing on a terrace and accompanied by two attendants. He is elegantly dressed in his fur-trimmed green brocade *khilat*; this ceremonial robe of honour was bestowed to Shuja ud-Daula by emperor Alamgir II (figure 25). By picturing the Nawab in his official garments, we have confirmation that this portrait was indeed produced after his succession in 1754. This work is ascribed to Sartul Singh, a relatively unknown artist. Whilst one would assume this to be produced in Faizabad or Lucknow, according to Losty, it is stylistically akin to the Murshidabad style of the 1750s.[17] Perhaps this was commissioned by the Nawab during his battles against the provincial leaders of Bengal between 1759 and 1764. Unfortunately, no other paintings by this artist can be located that may offer clarification on place and date of production.

In the Museum für Islamische Kunst in Berlin, there is another portrait of Shuja ud-Daula (figure 26). In the margin below the painting, it is inscribed *'Wazir al-Mamalik Nawab Shuja al-Daula Bahadur'*. This full-length profile portrait, pictures the Nawab against a generic landscape setting. He is dressed in a floor-length *jama* and holds a sword in his right hand. Shuja's physiognomy is similar to Gobind Singh's portrait of the ruler: he is rendered with his trademark drooping moustache and dark shadow of a lightly grown beard.

Aside from the previously mentioned portraits of Shuja ud-Daula, there is a final painting that needs to be addressed. 'A lion hunt in Allahabad,' attributed to Mir Kalan Khan, pictures the Nawab on horseback pursuing his prey (figure 27). It has been suggested that Mir Kalan Khan produced this ambitious portrait during Shuja's visit to

[17] Consversation with J.P. Losty, December 2007.

Allahabad in 1759-60. Not only did he capture Shuja's passion for hunting, he drew a panoramic view of the Allahabad landscape. This stupendous work could only have been either commissioned or produced for the Nawab himself. From these few early portraits of Shuja ud-Daula, we begin to see that artists employed systematic physiognomies that can now be recognised. Whilst in his youth he may have been a slender man, in the majority of portraits, Shuja is portrayed with an imposing figure, pale skin, a prominent drooping moustache, and a slight shadow of a beard.

Without doubt, further portraits of Shuja ud-Daula may exist in private or public collections. It is possible that one or several unknown examples may shed further information on Shuja's role as a patron or even details about the Awadhi artists. Through researching the topic of Awadhi painting, numerous portraits of unidentified Awadhi rulers and 'princes' have appeared in public collections and auction catalogues, though without any details to help ascertain the individual's identity. In recent years, two different portraits by Nidha Mal of Awadhi men have appeared at Sotheby's. The artist historian Barbara Schmitz (2002, 4-5) suggests that the sitter in both these portraits is Shuja ud-Daula. Schmitz assigns an early date of production, 1752-54, to the first study, of an 'Awadhi official receives a Mughal petitioner' (figure 28). The second, an 'Awadhi nobleman, probably Shuja ud-Daula, with five ladies of his harem watching entertainers in a winter garden' is assigned to 1755-65 (figure 29). Whilst there are no inscriptions that assist in identification, the portrayal of the young man with the undeveloped facial hair is reminiscent of the physiognomy presented in Sartul Singh's portrait of Shuja ud-Daula (figure 25).

Aside from the evidence of single portraits, it has been suggested that Shuja ud-Daula is the patron of at least two albums including the 'Fremantle' album and the 'small Clive' album. The first of these is named after Admiral E.R. Fremantle, who acquired this volume in India. Leach proposed that this album, now in the collection of the Chester Beatty Library, was assembled for Shuja ud-Daula by the 1770s (Leach 1995, 654-64). This album consists of eight Mughal paintings and ten provincial Mughal paintings produced in Faizabad in the 1770s. Although there is no seal or inscription clearly connecting the Nawab to this album, Leach (1995, 654-64) assumes that since several of the works are similar in style to the painter Mihr Chand and his studio, that there is a link to Shuja ud-Daula. She further states that the simplicity of these works precedes Mihr Chand's later style influenced by Antoine Polier; therefore the Nawab was the likely patron for Mihr Chand and his workshop during in the late 1760s and early 1770s (i.e. before Antoine Polier's official reassignment).

The second album, the small 'Clive' album, according to the records of the Victoria & Albert Museum, was presented to Lord Clive by Shuja ud-Daula during his last visit to India in 1765-67. This album, bound in red and white floral brocade from India, contains sixty-two miniature paintings and fifty-six floral studies that range in date from the late sixteenth century to the middle of the eighteenth century. Forging a direct connection between this album and to Shuja ud-Daula directly is exceedingly difficult; only a few miniatures within this album date to the mid-eighteenth century and it is impossible to determine if these examples were produced in Awadh or Delhi. Whilst the museum records indicate that the small 'Clive' album was gifted by Shuja ud-Daula, it does not offer any substantial information on the patron of the album.

Searching through the archives of auction houses in England, scholar Lucian Harris (2002) recently discovered evidence of at least one other album that may have been produced for Nawab Shuja ud-Daula. This album, once owned by Mr. Nathanial Middleton, the British Agent in Lucknow during the early 1780s, was sold at Town Hill under the direction of Mr. Christie on 19 February 1909 (Harris 2002, 76). It is believed that this 'high quality *muraqqa* [was] probably made for Nawab Shuja ud-Daula' and was described in the catalogue as (Harris 2002, 76):

> A magnificent collection of 62 high finished drawings, illustrating the costume of India, with descriptions in Persian at the back of each drawing with richly illuminated borders. Among the drawings is a highly interesting portrait of Emperor Jehan Gir [sic] with equestrian attendants ordering a criminal to execution. Also a whole length portrait of Shuja ud-Daula, who presented this superb collection to the late Proprietor. It is sumptuously bound in red morocco with blue silk registers and a gold fringe.

Regrettably, this album cannot be traced nor located.

Harris' thesis (2002) also mentions the collection of Jonathan Scott (1754-1829), who was the private secretary to Warren Hastings. While there is limited biographical information on Scott, it is believed that he spent a period of time in India and possibly in Lucknow. At least two important paintings relating to Awadh appeared from his collection in a sale at Leigh and Sotheby's on 5 March 1808 (Harris 2002, 120). These two paintings were of 'Nawab Shuja ud-Daula' and of a 'Hindu Rajah performing *puja* in the Ganges at Benares with Asaf ud-Daula on horseback' (Leigh and Sotheby 1808, Lots 127 and 131). Both these works had been individually framed and glazed and had evidently been hanging at Scott's cottage at Netly in Shropshire (Harris 2002, 120). However, without visual evidence, it is impossible to note the style of these paintings,

their provenance, as well as their date of production. Furthermore, without knowing these details, it is impossible to note the implications of Nawabi patronage.

While there is limited information on Shuja ud-Daula's patronage of the local painting tradition, archived letters between East India Company officials and the Nawab document his interest in western art. According to the *Calendar of Persian Correspondence* (CPC) (1911), a letter was addressed to the Nawab on 3 November 1771 (assumed to be from Warren Hastings or John Cartier, the Governor of Fort William). It was stated: 'Having learnt that the addressee wishes very much to see Mr. Kettle, a painter, the writer has ordered him to proceed to Fyzabad. Says that he is a master of his art and hopes the addressee will be much pleased with him' (CPC 1911, note 973). Several months later on 13 February 1772, the Nawab received another letter that stated: 'has [sic] just received eight pictures from England, which are sent to the addressee. Hope he will be very much pleased to receive them' (CPC 1991, note 1036). Although the correspondence presents the British viewpoint, it does indicate that Shuja showed an interest in western art.

Tilly Kettle was extremely fortunate to receive the backing of the East India Company as well as Shuja ud-Daula. From 1772 to 1773, Kettle resided in Faizabad and obtained numerous commissions from both the Nawab and British residents including General Sir Robert Baker. During this brief sojourn, Kettle produced approximately seven large oil studies illustrating Shuja ud-Daula featured in scenes with his heirs and British officers.[18] Kettle's portraits caused a stir amongst the local artists, including Mihr Chand, Nevasi Lal, and Mohan Singh who were fortunate to have the chance to study Kettle's work in detail.[19] The Nawab's invitation to Kettle was also promising for later European artists who travelled to India and wished to the see the splendour of Lucknow and Faizabad.

Whilst the Nawab of Awadh would be the most likely patron of local artists, during his reign there were other major patrons who have left behind legacy of Awadhi painting. Though one would presume the other patrons to be one of the Nawab's courtiers, there were three European patrons who supported Awadhi artists and who established their own 'workshops'. The following chapter will discuss in detail the various workshops and artists who flourished in Awadh in this period.

Shuja ud-Daula's death did not bring an end to local artistic production. His successor, Asaf ud-Daula, continued the legacy initiated by his father and provided

[18] See Appendix V for a list of Tilly Kettle's paintings produced in Faizabad.
[19] Kettle's influence on local artists will be discussed at various points throughout the following chapters.

support for both local artists and foreign artists to visit the region. Asaf ud-Daula's interest in the arts was not limited to painting; evidence of Nawabi libraries in Lucknow links the young ruler's interest to miniature paintings, calligraphy as well as poetry.[20] According to Sprenger (1979), who catalogued the Arabic and Persian manuscripts in the libraries of Lucknow from 1847 to 1850, there were three separate 'Royal Libraries' located in the Purana Daulat Khana, the Moti Mahal, and in the Farhat Bakhsh. While Sprenger's catalogue focuses on the literary manuscripts, he does mention that the library in the Purana Daulat Khan did house literary works from the library of Hafiz Rehmat Khan of Farrukhabad, which was looted in the 1770s during the rule of Shuja ud-Daula (Sprenger 1979). While there is a lack of credible evidence of Shuja ud-Daula's personal library, Sprenger's information does offer some idea of patronage or the interest in 'collecting'.

Colonel Gilbert Ironside, a collector of paintings and manuscripts, wrote of his observation of Asaf ud-Daula's collection in 1786 (Harris 2002, 76):

> His Excellency's collection of Indian pictures is considerable, and preserved in large portfolios. From the common daubings [sic] of the present country painters, no adequate conception can be formed of these. Most of them are antique productions and though the figures are generally small, yet is the drawing often correct, and the colouring admirable. In many, a story is completely told with clearness and precision instantly discernible, the characters accurately defined, and the passions naturally exhibited and strongly marked. An exactness of outline in the representation of natural objects peculiar to the country, as well as the air and carriage of the animals, is happily delineated; and the festoons, foliage, and Arabic writing illuminating the pictures, are altogether excellent. In the design of the houses, however, in attitudes of human forms, and in perspective, the artists appear emmenently [sic] defective. Nonetheless upon the whole, though widely different in manner from European matters, neither taste nor elegance are wanting to these compositions; and in the article of neat and delicate finishing, they are inimitable.

Asaf ud-Daula's collection grew from purchases he was able to make, including albums from dispersed or looted libraries such as the imperial Mughal library in Delhi. One of the most distinguished albums to fall into his hands was the *Padshanama* or the 'Chronicle of the King of the World', now in the Royal Collection at Windsor that had been commissioned by Emperor Shah Jahan as an illustrative manuscript to commemorate his reign (Beach and Koch 1997). Although Asaf ud-Daula purchased the

[20] It is unclear if Asaf ud-Daula inherited a library from his father or if he established his own library after moving to Lucknow. Evidence of Asaf ud-Daula's library comes from various seals and inscriptions on several manuscripts and paintings. See: Royal Windsor Collection, Accession No. RCIN 1005086.

album for the extravagant price of 12,000 Rupees, or £1500, he pressed the beautiful album onto Lord Teignmouth, who suggested to the Nawab to present this as a gift for the British King George III (Beach and Koch 1997, 13).

King George III was also the recipient of a second album that contained miniature paintings and specimens of Persian calligraphy from Asaf ud-Daula (Beach and Koch 1997, 13).[21] This album was bound in a lacquered binding which had beautiful illustrations showing scenes of men and women hunting and riding horses. Inside the album there are specimens of Persian calligraphy dating as early as the sixteenth century and portraits of ladies by various artists including Muhammad Panah. Labelled directly onto the cover was the seal of Asaf ud-Daula.

Aside from purchasing rare albums to fill his library, Asaf ud-Daula commissioned local artists to provide illustrations to accompany historical manuscripts. One of Asaf ud-Daula's important commissions was the *Jangnama-i Asaf al Daula* ('Book of Battles of Asaf ud-Daula'), a historical manuscript written by Hafiz Khayr-Allah in 1797 on the Nawab's battle against Ghulam Muhammad Khan of Rampur (Schmitz and Desai 2006, 114). Although there are only three illustrations within this volume, they signify Asaf ud-Daula's patronage. The three illustrations include a profile portrait of Asaf ud-Daula, 'the Nawab fighting the British', and the 'Nawab seated in the Aish-Bagh garden in Lucknow watching entertainments' (Schmitz and Desai 2006, 114). Asaf ud-Daula's position as a patron of the arts is further substantiated in an illustrated manuscript dedicated to the Nawab. Poet Mir Hasan Dihlavi included a dedication and portraits of both Shah Alam II and Asaf ud-Daula at the beginning of his work, 'Sir al-Bayan', as a eulogy to the recently deceased Nawab of Awadh' (Christie's 2007, Lot 167).

Asaf ud-Daula's broad interest in the fine arts included a passion for collecting European decorative arts and furniture. Claude Martin would often procure pieces including rare clocks and furniture for the Nawab's palaces. Following in his father's footsteps, Asaf ud-Daula welcomed European painters to his court in Lucknow and made himself available for portraits to be taken. Several notable European artists, who had heard of Kettle's achievements and financial success during his visit to Awadh, were keen to travel to the northern court.

The earliest painter to arrive in Lucknow was William Hodges (1744-97), the celebrated British landscape artist who accompanied Captain Cook on his second

[21] Royal Windsor Collection, Accession No. RCIN 1005086. Windsor records state that King George III received five albums from Nawab Asaf ud-Daula.

voyage to New Zealand, South Pacific and Antarctica (Tillotson 2000, 5-6). Travelling in India from 1780 to 1783, he visited both the deserted city of Faizabad as well as Lucknow during his final leg of his journey. Hodges illustrated various palaces and residences of the late Nawab Shuja ud-Daula as well as the new buildings in Lucknow. These studies by Hodges offer contemporary viewers an understanding of the architectural style of several buildings that have long since disappeared, including Shuja's palace in Faizabad (figure 12).[22] During his visit to Lucknow, Hodges was also well received by the illustrious European residents including Claude Martin and Antoine Polier. Adding to his portfolio, Hodges also prepared illustrations of Martin's homes. The friendship that he developed with Martin and Polier was extremely fortuitous for the artist; when he became afflicted with dysentery and required medical attention, both Polier and Martin were readily available to help alleviate his sufferings. On his return to England, Hodges spoke highly of the court of Asaf ud-Daula and his encounters with Martin and Polier to other fellow artists who would soon embark on their own journey to India.

Hearing of Hodges' success and his experience in India, the portrait painter Johann Zoffany (1733-1810) immediately applied for permission from the East India Company to travel to India in 1782 (Archer 1979, Harris 2002, 131).[23] Zoffany arrived in Madras in 1783 and then travelled up to Calcutta and westward to Lucknow. Zoffany's journey echoes the route taken by Kettle in the previous decade. However, Zoffany was more successful in India than either Kettle or his contemporaries. In Calcutta, Zoffany rapidly became acquainted with the British elite including Chief Justice Sir Elijah Impey and Warren Hastings. After completing numerous conversation-style paintings and portrait studies for the Impeys and other leading families in Calcutta, he followed Hastings to Lucknow in June 1784 (Archer 1979, 141). For Zoffany, his encounters with Asaf ud-Daula and the Mughal prince Jawan Bakht provided him with enough material to produce several paintings.[24] Zoffany produced a painting illustrating 'Warren Hastings meeting Jawan Bakht' (the son of Shah Alam II) as well as portraits of Asaf ud-Daula, and one of Asaf's leading courtiers, Hasan Reza Khan (Archer 1979, 146-47). Asaf ud-Daula's indulgence in pleasure over

[22] In the collection of the British Library, engravings produced after Hodges' originals include 'Palace at Fyzabad' (P123); 'A view of the Palace of Nabob Asoph ul Dowlah at Lucknow' (W2126). Other works by Hodges included 'View of Part of the City of Oudh', (X 744, 1); 'A view of part of the Palace of the late Nabob Suja ul Dowla at Fizabad,' (X 744, 37).

[23] Johann Zoffany was a celebrated member of the Royal Academy who visited India from 1783-89.

[24] Jawan Bakht is the son of Shah Alam II.

politics was appropriately noted by Zoffany, who personified the Nawab's interest in cock-fighting in his painting 'Colonel Mordaunt's Cock Match' and placed the Nawab in the centre of the activity (figure 30). Visiting Lucknow, Zoffany made a point of meeting with Polier, Martin, and other important European residents after hearing of them through Hodges. Zoffany's encounters resulted in yet another masterpiece that offered a commentary on the role of the cultural elite in Lucknow. His work 'Colonel Polier, Claude Martin and John Wombwell with the artist' not only documented these figureheads, critiquing Zoffany's own paintings, but also commented on their interest in late Mughal painting, as inferred through a single bound album of paintings strategically situated on the centre of the table (figure 31). Of great interest, the open pages of the album, with the broad floral marginal decorations, is stylistically similar in design to the Polier albums in Berlin.

Although Asaf ud-Daula granted permission to both Hodges and Zoffany, there were other painters who wished to seek an audience with the Nawab. While Zoffany's fame overshadowed the Lucknow art scene, British portrait painters Charles Smith (1749-1824) and Ozias Humphrey (1742-1810) were also made welcome by Asaf ud-Daula in February 1786. Smith and Humphrey, both eager to paint portraits of Asaf and Jawan Bakht, must have been disappointed as they were only offered joint appointments with the sitters. It is believed that 'the Nawab, bored with constantly sitting for his portrait, but reluctant to displease [Governor-General John] Macpherson, sat jointly to Smith and Humphrey on 10, 12, 22 April, Smith painting in oils and Humphrey in miniature' (Archer 1979, 180). While Smith and Humphrey were fortunate enough to receive the appointments, they were short-changed by the Nawab who neglected to make payment on the portraits he received. Both painters were further incensed when they approached Macpherson, who declined to intervene to obtain their late payments (Archer 1979, 184; Farington 1978, 895-86). Ultimately, after painstaking measures, Smith finally received a payment from the Nawab. For Smith and Humphrey, Asaf's reluctance to pay their bills caused enormous difficulties, as they required the income to move to the next city or even return to England.

Smith and Humphrey were not the only artists who did not receive payment from the Nawab. The uncle and nephew duo Thomas (1749-1840) and William Daniell (1769-1837), known for their series of 'Oriental Scenery' that captured the landscape and architecture of various cities across India including Calcutta, Allahabad, Agra, and Delhi as well as Madras, arrived in Awadh in 1789 (Daniell, 1815). An account from November 1793 records the problems faced by Thomas Daniell (Farington 1978, 87):

> After making a circuitous visit to the cities of [Lucknow and Fyzabad] they came to Lucknow, where the Nabob visited them and expressed his pleasure on seeing the drawings Mr. D had made and commissioned him to make a set of views of Lucknow which Mr. D undertook, and under many disadvantages, it being the rainy season, completed them, which took him three months. The Nabob received them but Mr. D could never get the smallest retribution for his time and trouble. Mr. D had not been successful in his endeavours to make a fortune, all admired his works, but little was received from who expressed it.

European artists who visited Lucknow and Faizabad had a profound effect on the local artists in the region. Portraits produced by Kettle, Zoffany, Smith and Humphrey were readily copied by artists such Mihr Chand and his contemporaries. Kettle's portraits of Shuja ud-Daula inspired Mihr Chand to produce multiple copies as previously mentioned; several 'after Kettle' portraits of the Nawab by unidentified Awadhi artists have also appeared in public collections. Zoffany too, inspired local artists; an impressive study entitled 'Antoine Polier watching a *nautch*' (not to be confused with Mihr Chand's painting from 1773) (figure 32) is believed to be a copy of a lost Zoffany. Smith's portrait, 'Jawan Bakht', was also very popular and readily copied by local artists in 1786 (figure 33). Antoine Polier's collection includes two versions of Jawan Bakht in which the Mughal heir is presented sitting on a sofa wearing a simple white *jama* and green turban and resting his hands on the hilt of his sword (figure 34).

Although this thesis focuses particularly on the period of Nawab Shuja ud-Daula and Asaf ud-Daula, it is important to understand that the fine arts including painting and architecture would become an integral part of Nawabi patronage under the successive rulers of Awadh. In the nineteenth century, the Nawabs (later Kings of Awadh) would focus their ambition on creating even more complex and prodigal palaces and architectural structures than those previously seen in the region. While European concepts had already influenced architecture and painting, the Nawabs of Awadh continued to hold high esteem for these ideas and would utilise them to create unique buildings such as Dilkusha and the Qaisarbagh Palace in Lucknow.

In regards to painting, the later Mughal or Awadhi tradition began to wane in the nineteenth century, and a modified version appeared that would become known as 'Company Painting' as it reflected the tastes in terms of style and subject that would appeal to the British and Europeans living in India at the time. While genres such as 'trades and occupations' and architecture were extremely popular, portraiture was also

persevered under these later Nawabs. Large-scale portraits, similar to the style of Tilly Kettle, were produced of the later Awadhi rulers including Ghazi ud-din Haidar (r. 1814-27) and Wajid Ali Shah (r. 1847-56). However, one of the most important works produced in the mid-nineteenth century, which reflected the provincial Mughal style of the century before, was an illustrated manuscript produced under the direction of Wajid Ali Shah in 1847. Wajid Ali Shah, an accomplished poet and playwright, commissioned Lucknow artists to provide illustrations to accompany a *masnvai* poem 'concerning life in Lucknow's courtly circles, together with anecdotes of the author's life and loves.'[25] This beautifully illustrated manuscript consists of approximately 103 miniature paintings, each picturing the various scenes from the King's life.

[25] Wajid Ali Shah (1265 A.H./1849 A.D.), *'Ishqnamah,* Royal Collection, Windsor Castle, RCIN 1005035.

CHAPTER 2

Deterioration of the Mughal atelier in Delhi and the synthesis into the Awadhi painting tradition

Shuja ud-Daula cannot wholly be credited for initiating the phenomenon of the painting tradition in Awadh. In order to understand the development of this nouveau style, one turns to its precursor, the imperial Mughal painting tradition, that had been incepted by emperor Humayun in the sixteenth century and is probably the most well known painting tradition to have flourished in the South Asian subcontinent. The Mughal tradition, having reached its climax in the seventeenth century, suffered in the eighteenth century, as the diminished state of the imperial court of Delhi could no longer support the lavish ateliers and the artists. As courtiers left Delhi for the provinces, Mughal artists followed where they were fortunate to receive patronage from the Nawabs of Awadh and select European officers. As a result, the late Mughal painting tradition was given a new lease of life in this region by the mid-eighteenth century and would later be known as the Awadhi style.

The idiom of Mughal painting refers to the local tradition and was inherently an eclectic combination of the prevailing indigenous Hindu style, with the new styles introduced from the Safavid courts in Persia. From inception, the Mughal style has been susceptible to a wide array of influences and embraced new ideologies, such as those from European art brought to the Mughal courts from Portuguese Jesuit missionaries. In general, Mughal paintings have been predominantly viewed as a court sponsored or imperial art form initiated during the reign of the emperor Babur (r. 1526-30) and his successor Humayun (r. 1530-40; 1555-56). However, the formalisation of the 'imperial' Mughal style occurred under the patronage of the emperors Akbar (r. 1556-1605), Jahangir (r. 1605-27) and Shah Jahan (r. 1628-58). As a result of scholarly research, the great era of Mughal painting has been confined within this mid-sixteenth to mid-seventeenth century period. Nonetheless, the Mughal style did persevere, though on a much reduced scale, until the Mughal Empire collapsed in the mid-nineteenth century.

Reviewing the major publications on Mughal painting, such as those by M.C. Beach (1978), S. P. Verma (2005), S. Stronge (2004), and J. Seyller (1999), it becomes clear that their focus is strictly limited to the paintings produced during the reigns of Akbar, Jahangir, and Shah Jahan. Their publications discuss the formation of the Mughal painting tradition, the role of imperial patronage, review the major illustrated manuscripts, and discuss the influence of the key artists at the imperial workshop. From

these studies, we are aware of the importance of imperial patronage, how patronage impacted the development of portraiture and natural history studies as two important genres, as well as the impact of Christian iconography and techniques on Mughal artists.

Compared to the 'imperial' phase of Mughal painting, the 'later' Mughal tradition fluctuated in style and quality as artists began to seek alternative, non-imperial sources of patronage, especially after the mid-eighteenth century. Scholarship on Mughal painting has been somewhat misleading, casting the impression that the idiom of Mughal painting was only synonymous with imperial sponsorship and extant only under the patronage and guidance of the emperors Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan and (somewhat lesser) Aurangzeb. As a result, scholars have almost wholly ignored the later phase of Mughal painting.

This abrupt ending of scholarship on the Mughal painting tradition has made it difficult to assess the style of paintings produced in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Delhi and at the regional Mughal courts. Though this is not to say that art historians have completely neglected this topic; only cursory discussions have appeared in publications by Falk and Archer (1981) as well as Leach (1995). As there is a multitude of later Mughal paintings in public and private collections, one questions why art historians have not systematically reviewed the later tradition that flourished between the reigns of Aurangzeb (r. 1658-1707) to Bahadur Shah II (r. 1837-58). Without understanding the style of later Mughal painting, it becomes difficult to explain the rise of the Mughal style in Awadh or Bengal, especially when discussing the achievements of the regional artists. Therefore, the first half of this chapter will offer a review of the patronage bestowed by these later Mughal emperors, the stylistic achievements, as well as provide details of the names of the known artists or their paintings. The second half of this chapter will discuss the rise of the later Mughal painting tradition in Awadh, the role of Nawabi patronage, and the impact of European patrons.

1. The 'decline' of imperial Mughal painting

It has been the general consensus that the decline of the Mughal painting tradition was directly linked to Aurangzeb's orthodoxy and political reign. Aurangzeb's orthodoxy played a decisive role as he eradicated most genres of painting aside from austere ceremonial portraiture, thus greatly reducing the output of Mughal workshop (Leach 1995, 482-83). A final factor forcing the artistic tradition to falter was the relocation of the Mughal capital from Delhi to Aurangabad in 1681 (Falk and Archer 1981, 89). This move southwards would have been an arduous journey that many artists may have wished to avoid.

Although scholars have marginalised this period of painting, it is during this period that we see the culmination of Mughal influence on Deccani artists by the 1680s. For the past fifty years, there was a transmission of Mughal style from the capital to Ahmadnagar, where the Mughals as well as the Sultans of Bijapur were fighting for political control (Michell and Zebrowski 1999, 177). Stylistic nuances and portraiture conventions of the Mughal atelier would be reflected in the work of their Deccani contemporaries. It comes as no surprise that there was an exchange of artistic ideas. Portrait studies of princes and officers are indicative of the stylistic nuances that were assimilated into the Deccani idiom, particularly at the end of the seventeenth century. From the Mughals, Deccani artists became aware of the concept of realism as well as adopting their portraiture conventions, such as equestrian and terrace studies. The portrait of 'Nawab Abdul Ghaffar Khan Bahadur' pictures a combination of 'the delicate line of Golconda painting and the earthiness of the Bijapur school' with the realism of formal Mughal court portraiture (figure 35) (Michell and Zebrowski 1999, 177). It is worth mentioning that Deccani artists not only became aware of the Mughal idiom, but that Rajput officers commissioning portraits in the region would introduce them to the Rajput painting style of western India (Zebrowski 1983, 209).

Given the lack of Aurangzeb's interest in the painting tradition, artists eagerly anticipated the news that the emperor's sons would succeed in 1707. Hearing of Aurangzeb's death, his eldest son Bahadur Shah I (who would ultimately become emperor) immediately travelled from Kabul to Agra with the intention of announcing his succession. However, his younger brothers also had their sights on succeeding, and Azam Shah proclaimed himself emperor. Arriving in Agra, he launched an attack on Bahadur Shah, battling for the throne. Unfortunately, his limited finances hindered his efforts and he was killed on the battlefield. In 1709, Bahadur Shah was again challenged

by one of his siblings, his younger brother Kambaksh, with whom he fought in the city of Hyderabad. Yet again, Bahadur Shah and his army prevailed.

During this period of uncertainty, Mughal artists remained in the Deccan, unsure of what the future would bring. Bahadur Shah's reign would bring about a period of change. One of his first actions as emperor was to shift the Mughal capital from Aurangabad back to Delhi. For artists, this shift was a positive move, as there were artists who had remained in Delhi during the late seventeenth century who would seek patronage from Bahadur Shah and his courtiers. Although there are limited examples of paintings that can be dated to Bahadur Shah's reign, the few portraits that were produced by artists, including Bhawani Das, reflected a retrospective interest in the style of painting that had become popular under Shah Jahan.[26] The Mughal atelier moved away from austere ceremonial portraiture and revived the formal *darbar* scenes that would picture the emperor in all his glory. Looking at two portraits in particular, 'Bahadur Shah enthroned' (figure 36) and 'A gathering of princes' (figure 37), we clearly see the striking similarities in compositional format of the emperor seated on a throne and surrounded by rows of courtiers as one would expect to see in Shah Jahan's *Padshanama* (figure 38). In these paintings, artists consciously paid meticulous attention to the details of the throne and the designs on the clothing and the carpeting. The few known paintings, produced in the Bahadur Shah I period, are primarily unsigned or have yet to be attributed to a particular artist, though the names of at least three artists from this period are known and include Rai Anup Chattar, Thakur Rao Gaj Singh, and Bhawani Das (Falk and Archer 1981, 106-07).

Bahadur Shah's death in 1712 sent a new set of shock waves through the hereditary line, this time amongst his four sons Azim al-Shan, Jahandar Shah, Rafi-ush Shan and Jahan Shah, who all battled for kingship. Ultimately, Jahandar Shah, through the military and financial assistance of one of his father's leading courtiers named Zulfikar Khan, became victor. However, his reign was short-lived and ended within a few months. Few portrait studies of Jahandar Shah and his brothers were produced, though it is difficult to attribute these works to a specific patron or date. One of the more grandiose portraits produced was of Azim al-Shan's succession entitled 'Prince Azim al-Shan enthroned with Khwaja Khizr' (figure 39). From first glance, we become conscious that Azim al-Shan's ceremonial portrait imitates the Shah Jahan style that resurged under the patronage of Bahadur Shah. As the reign of Azim al-Shan (r. 1712)

[26] J. P. Losty, 'Later Period of Mughal Painting', *Grove Art Online* <www.groveart.com>, accessed Nov. 11 2005.

was short-lived, Beach's theory that 'this accession portrait must have been commissioned by Azimushshan [sic] and completed soon after his proclamation' becomes questionable (Beach and Koch 1997, 125). Losty (2005) suggests that it is more likely that it was Azim al-Shan's son, Farrukh Siyar, who commissioned the portrait in respect to his father.

The battles of succession would provide Mughal artists with new material by which to visualise a historical narrative. In the later eighteenth century, artists collaborated to produce an untitled illustrated historical narrative that documented the battles amongst Aurangzeb's descendents.[27] This incomplete account, produced in the 1770s, is based on an early eighteenth century work. The narrative includes scenes showing a battle between Bahadur Shah and his brother Kambakhsh in Hyderabad (fol. 3b), the death of Bahadur Shah (fol. 10a), and scenes depicting battles amongst Jahandar Shah and his brothers (fol. 13a, 14b, and 15a).[28] While this volume lacks information about its patron, it clearly demonstrated the renewed interest in historical paintings that previously had been eradicated by Aurangzeb.

Although it is extremely difficult to date paintings and identify patrons in the intermediate period between 1707 and 1712, during the reigns of Farrukh Siyar (r. 1712-19) and Muhammad Shah (r. 1719-39) artists revived the painting tradition. Lacklustre illustrations were replaced with vibrant colour palettes and there was a preference for vivacious imagery. During this period, Mughal artists would review the genres and formats of painting established by their predecessors in the first half of the seventeenth century, and strived to emulate the masterpieces of the imperial Mughal artists. It is the works of the early eighteenth century artists that provides a basis to compare the later Mughal style of painting that appeared in Awadh in the second half of the eighteenth century.

Farrukh Siyar, son of Azim al-Shan (r. 1712), has received limited attention in regards to his patronage of Mughal artists in Delhi. Considering the evidence of a number of paintings of a higher quality that can be dated to his reign, it can be suggested that Farrukh Siyar was much more conscious of offering support to the imperial workshop as compared to his predecessor. There are numerous portrait studies of Farrukh Siyar that date to his reign and indicate that portraiture was the most popular genre at this time. Studies of the emperor were formal arrangements picturing him standing outdoors, on horseback or meeting one of his courtiers. In viewing these

[27] BL APAC, Or. 3610

[28] 'Detached fragments of an historical work relating to the reigns of Bahadur Shah I and Jahandar Shah I (c. 1770-1800),' BL APAC, Or. 3610.

works, it becomes apparent that Mughal artists were fascinated with representing the elemental changes in weather, indicating the precise moment of the day by using various combinations of colours and gold paint. Artists transformed standard images by incorporating complex and often fantastic background imagery, such as rolling cloud formations and beautifully coloured multi-hued skies, as seen in the following portrait (figure 40).[29] Furthermore, artists shifted their colour palette from sombre tones to brilliant hues. Losty succinctly writes: 'Vividness of colour almost to the point of garishness is characteristic of paintings at this time.'[30]

The iconography perfected and pictured in the following portrait study would become the standardised format that would be replicated by later Mughal artists throughout the eighteenth century as well as in the following centuries. This established format depicted the emperor in profile (more often facing the viewer's right) with his distinctive heavy facial hair with adjoined side burns, moustache and full beard (figure 41). This is a rather unusual depiction, as Farrukh Siyar is pictured not only holding a *sarpesh* in his left hand but also a *chauri* (flywhisk), which is traditionally held by an attendant in the background as a sign of royalty.

In 1719, Farrukh Siyar's death prompted violence and battles amongst his relations. Several of Aurangzeb's grandsons including Rafi ud-Darajat (r. 1719), Rafi ud-Daula (r. 1719) and Nikusiyar (r. 1719) believed that they each had the hereditary right to succeed as emperor. Ultimately, it was Bahadur Shah's grandson Muhammad Shah who would succeed in 1719. Portraits of these minor rulers do exist. However, it is uncertain whether they were painted at the time of rule or posthumously to fill the need for historical documentation, as demonstrated in Polier's album '*Genialogie des Empereurs.*'[31]

Under the patronage of Muhammad Shah (r. 1719-48), the tradition of painting demonstrates a remarkable advancement in both style and subject matter in comparison to earlier eighteenth century works. Muhammad Shah can be applauded for his role in re-igniting the imperial Mughal style, as he commissioned equestrian portraits as well as eye-catching scenes picturing him engaged in leisurely activity inside the harem. More often the topics illustrated by the artists of his workshop reflected the emperor's attention towards recreational activities instead of his position as leader of the Mughal

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[29] In this portrait of Farrukh Siyar, it needs to be clarified that the landscape in the background was added in the 1770s and not contemporary to the portrait or the depiction of the sky.
[30] J. P. Losty, 'Later Period of Mughal Painting', *Grove Art Online* <www.groveart.com>, accessed Nov. 11 2005.
[31] MAK I 5063.

empire, which has been perceived by scholars as a true reflection of his character. As compared to his predecessors, Muhammad Shah was uninterested in politics and 'he totally withdrew himself from public business, leaving it to his ministers, and plunged into a life of pleasure and amusement, hardly ever going out of Delhi during his 28 years of reign, except to visit parks in the neighbourhood and occasionally to see the annual fair' (Sarkar 1991, 3-4). Furthermore, 'his sole diversion outside the harem was witnessing animal fights on the sandy banks of the Jamuna below the window of morning salute in the Delhi palace' (Sarkar 1991, 3-4). An early illustration of the emperor, entitled 'Muhammad Shah encounters a party of ladies', succinctly captures his preference for pleasure, women and hawking (figure 42).

The substantial number of portrait studies of Muhammad Shah has led Terrance McInerney (2003) to publish a list of the known artists affiliated to the imperial workshop, review commissioned paintings, and discuss the trademark style of painting that flourished in this period. According to McInerney, the imperial workshop during Muhammad Shah's reign consisted of at least 10-12 artists including Chitarman (fl. 1715-60), Nidha Mal (fl. 1735-75), Hunhar (fl. 1740-80), Govardhan (fl. 1720-45),[32] Muhammad Faqirullah Khan (fl. 1720-70),[33] Muhammad Afzal (fl. 1740-80), Mir Kalan Khan (fl. 1735-70), and Kalyan Rai (c. 1740). 'With the exception of Bhupal Singh, another talented yet little known disciple of Chitarman, and two or three anonymous painters, the foregoing completes the list of Muhammad Shah's small, yet talented, team of painters' (McInerney 2003, 20). McInerney's assumption that the atelier only consisted of these 10-12 artists is short sighted. There is the distinct possibility that there were other artists, of a lower calibre, that were working in the imperial workshop during this period. While McInerney's viewpoint is debatable, this list of artists provides the basis on which to trace the movement of established Delhi artists who later appeared in Awadh. The Delhi artists, namely Nidha Mal, Hunhar, Chitarman, Faqirullah Khan, Muhammad Afzal, and Mir Kalan Khan, had relocated to Awadh by the mid-eighteenth century to seek the patronage of Nawab Shuja ud-Daula who had established his court at the cities of Lucknow and Faizabad. These artists and their styles will be discussed in the second half of this chapter.

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[32] The artist Govardhan should not be confused with an earlier Mughal artist with the same name who flourished in the seventeenth century. This Govardhan is known for his miniatures in the manuscript *Karnama-I 'ishq* written by Rai Anand Ram in 1733 (Falk and Archer 1981, 109-10).

[33] Falk & Archer (1981, 112) refer to him as Muhammad Faquirullah Khan (fl. c. 1740s).

The portrait studies of Muhammad Shah, particular those by Nidha Mal and Chitarman, exhibit a new awareness of how to position individuals and objects within a specified location as compared to the 'compacted' paintings of the early eighteenth century. McInerney's succinctly defined the current painterly style. He (McInerney 2003, 17) wrote:

> When judged by the standard of the earlier Mughal style, Muhammad Shah-period painting has a new simplicity of colour. Compositions have transparent geometrical structure that ensures symmetry and formal balance. Figures, landscape details, and architectural elements have crisp shapes and sharp contours, and they rarely overlap. The palette reflects a preference for subtle gradations of white and grey enlivened by syncopated accents of brilliant colour. Paint is applied in thin layers, yet burnished to an enamel-like opacity and hardness. Space is generally confined to a shallow foreground, with the background often an empty sky or flat wall. There is very little tonal modelling in these pictures: light, colour and form have the unreal clarity of a shadow less world.

In essence, painters of the Muhammad Shah period were conscious of experimenting with spatial awareness and dimensions within their compositions. Instead of 'stacking' individuals closely to one another, as seen in the *darbar* scenes of the Shah Jahan and Bahadur Shah periods, artists permitted each individual their own space within the scene. The artist's attention to space was also noticeable in their placement of objects, the designs of buildings and landscapes. By using a larger picture plane (or paper), the artist was able to expand his ideas and concepts without being constrained and cramping or overlapping objects. The following portrait attributed to Chitarman that is entitled 'Muhammad Shah in a palanquin', expresses the idea of openness within the composition as compared to the *darbar* style group portraits produced by Bhawani Das in the Bahadur Shah period (figure 43).

In terms of genres, artists favoured portrait studies, mainly idealised representations of the emperor engaged with women in the *zenana* or pursuing outdoor activities. As compared to earlier Mughal studies, artists of Muhammad Shah's atelier expressed a penchant for whimsical and hedonistic imagery, picturing the emperor innocently frolicking with women in the zenana. Chitarman took one step further and produced a brazen study of the emperor making love to a woman (figure 44). Not all portraits of Muhammad Shah cast him in this somewhat narcissistic light. Historical accounts give the impression that Muhammad Shah left the political decisions in the hands of his ministers and preferred to concentrate his attention on the pleasures and amusements of the harem; however, several portraits suggest otherwise. Of the portrait

studies of Muhammad Shah, there is one perplexing image of the emperor meeting his nemesis Nadir Shah (figure 45). Given the fact that Muhammad Shah was left incapacitated by Nadir Shah's invasion of Delhi in 1739, illustrating a cordial meeting between the two leaders with Nadir Shah on the right, seems unrealistic. While the artist's interpretation visualised the meeting between the two rulers, it wrongly casts the impression that it was Muhammad Shah who held the upper hand. In general, artists of this period avoided historical subjects that would have reflected the political mood and tension in the Mughal capital.

Muhammad Shah's death in 1748 brought forth a period of decline in Mughal painting. In the following decades, Ahmad Shah (r. 1748-54), Alamgir II (r. 1754-59) and Shah Alam II (r. 1759-1806) were unable to uphold the artistic tradition that had been revived by Muhammad Shah. Hindering the continuation of the painting tradition was the fact that Delhi was still in a precarious state and was constantly plundered by invaders, including the Marathas and Afghans during the 1750s and 1760s. It can be assumed that there were artists who remained in Delhi, patiently waiting for an official request from the emperor. To pass the time, these artists explored topics and illustrated scenes that would appeal to a wider audience. Artists revisited portraits of the deceased princes and emperors, composed studies of natural history subjects, produced romantic night time scenes of women on terraces playing with fireworks, *ragamala* pictures, and even architectural drawings of the Mughal landmarks.

Unfortunately for artists, Ahmad Shah was neither interested in matters of state as he relinquished his authority to the eunuch Javid Khan, nor did not seem to show any favour for the painting tradition, which can be construed from the lack of miniature paintings from this period. Sarkar has commented on Ahmad Shah's character, noting that he was 'a good natured imbecile without a personality of his own and entirely dominated by others' and that 'he never inquired about the realm, the soldiery or the treasury, three foundations of the Empire' and instead remained in the harem (Sarkar 1991, 163-64). With this lack of personality and interest in politics, it could be questioned if Ahmad Shah was in any fit state to have commissioned paintings.

Alamgir II succeeded in 1754 and was another unlikely candidate to oversee the imperial workshop. Although he did succeed as emperor, he was immediately outmanoeuvred by Ghazi ud-din *Imad-ul-Mulk* and the Marathas and held captive in the Delhi fort. While it is difficult to estimate how many artists and assistants were affiliated to the imperial atelier in this period, it is known that a few of Muhammad Shah's artists did remain in Delhi, including Nidha Mal and a minor artist by the name

of Shihab ad-Din.[34] Stylistically, the works produced in this period were radically different from those of the Muhammad Shah period. This was immediately apparent in portrait studies of the reigning emperors Ahmad Shah (figure 46) and Alamgir II, which were simplistic in nature and did not convey any particular attributes of the individuals. As well as producing portraits of the descendants of Timur, artists surprisingly produced studies of the fierce invaders who plundered Delhi, including Nadir Shah (figure 47) and Ahmad Shah Abdali (Durrani). Even more astonishing are the existing portraits of Ghazi ud-Din *Imad ul-Mulk* who occupied Delhi and is believed to have murdered emperor Alamgir II (Titley 1977, 165).

In May 1758, towards the end of Alamgir II's reign, his son Ali Gauhar (Shah Alam II) fled from Delhi in fear of an assassination attempt. Ali Gauhar's departure from the capital was ominous for any remaining Mughal artists in Delhi. Without a future emperor to finance the Mughal atelier, it was pointless for artists to remain, as Maratha forces occupied both the city and fort. Aside from the option to follow Ali Gauhar to the Mughal provinces of Awadh and Bengal, many artists would seek patronage in other regions of the subcontinent including Rajasthan and the Punjab Hills. Some of the smaller and independent courts who welcomed the displaced artists included Kota, Bundi, Kishangarh, and Udaipur in Rajasthan.

In contrast to his predecessors Ahmad Shah and Alamgir II, there is some relevant biographical information on Ali Gauhar that documents his interest in the fine and literary arts. Raised in Delhi, Ali Gauhar was highly educated and proficient in numerous languages including Arabic, Persian, and Indian dialects (Sarkar 1991, 314). As an aficionado of poetry, Ali Gauhar composed an anthology of poems under the name of 'Aftab' entitled the *Diwan of Aftab.*[35] Although only his interest in the literary arts has been documented, it was very likely that he had an interest in Mughal paintings as well. It has also been substantiated that one of the artists of Muhammad Shah's atelier, Hunhar (fl. 1740-70), accompanied the prince on his excursions to the provinces during the years 1758-59 (Skelton 1956).[36] Furthermore, evidence of his interest in Mughal painting is corroborated by a *muraqqa* of miniatures and calligraphy, marked with his seal and dated 1181 AH (1767-68), that he gifted to Antoine Polier (figure 48). However, there are only a few portraits of Shah Alam II that can be located. Aside from

[34] A single work by Shihab ad-Din is currently in the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum, London. 'A sick lion licking its paw.' Shihab ad-Din, c. 1750. V&A, IS 4651952 33/ G

[35] *Diwan of Aftab*, 1209 AH (1795). BL APAC, Or. 273.

[36] Skelton also notes that there is a seal of ownership on the reverse that indicates this work was owned by Hidayatullah Khan (the Vizir of Prince Ali Gauhar) and dated 1173 AH (1759 AD).

Mihr Chand's portraits of Shah Alam II (discussed at length in the following chapters), it is very likely that the few others portrait studies from the 1770s were produced post 1772 when the emperor returned to Delhi (figure 49).

Classifying and identifying paintings produced during the reign of Shah Alam II is rather complex. For the first part of his reign from 1759-72, the emperor travelled across northern India and focused on strengthening his ties to the provincial governors in Awadh and Bengal. With the lack of imperial patronage in Delhi, it is extremely difficult to determine if there were any artists working in the capital at this time. Paintings that have been dated during the period 1759-72, reflecting the Mughal style, should instead be considered the product of the later Mughal painting tradition in Awadh or Bengal. In light of Shah Alam II's return to Delhi in 1772, the artistic tradition did pick up. The few paintings datable to this period do show a preference for portraits of living and deceased emperors. These later paintings are often classified as products of the Delhi school. A last point worthy of mention is that there has been some discussion that, during the years of Shah Alam's residence in Delhi (1772-1806), artists were busy copying and reproducing Mughal masterpieces. Several of these 'copies' have been identified in the Victoria & Albert Museum's Wantage album (Stronge 2004, 145-47). While these have been dated to the early nineteenth century, Losty suggests that these copies are more likely from a slightly later period, intended for British and European collectors who were interested in acquiring old masters in the first quarter of the nineteenth century.[37]

As has been previously stated, imperial sponsorship of the painting atelier was extremely limited and, with the precarious political state, it was impossible for artists to persevere. Only limited paintings and manuscripts can be concretely attributed to the patronage of Ahmad Shah, Alamgir II, and Shah Alam II. Thus in the second half of the eighteenth century, the Mughal artist in Delhi was becoming a dying breed. Although the majority of published information on the Mughal painting tradition finishes with the end of Shah Jahan's reign, this first part of the chapter explored the social climate in which the painting tradition persevered through early nineteenth century. Furthermore, this overview highlights the impact of patronage and the distinctive painterly style which appeared through the eighteenth century. This developed overview now brings us to the second half of the eighteenth century, when Mughal artists left Delhi for the provinces in search of new patronage.

[37] Personal conversation with J.P. Losty on 28 December 2007.

2. *Inception of the Awadhi painting tradition*

The diffusion of Mughal culture to satellite courts in the provinces of Awadh and Bengal during the eighteenth century sparked the formation of independent schools of painting that have been classified by select scholars as 'provincial Mughal'. While this classification alludes to the imperial Mughal roots of Delhi, the style of painting that flourished in the province of Awadh should instead be referred to as 'Awadhi' or by the exact city of production. Similar to the exodus of artists of the Aurangzeb period who relocated to the Deccan in the late seventeenth century, the inception of the Awadhi and Bengali traditions of painting was directly linked to the migration of artists from the capital to the regional courts. While artists appeared in Bengal during the reign of Alivardi Khan (r. 1740-56), it was only in the late 1750s that artists settled in the cities of Lucknow and Faizabad (Skelton 1956, 10). While the cities of Lucknow (1754-65; 1775 onwards) and Faizabad (1765-75) saw the majority of artistic activity in the nearby locales of Farrukhabad and Bareilly, Shuja ud-Daula's contemporary, the Rohilla chief Hafiz Rehmat Khan (fl. 1770s), was also known for his support of the displaced artists (Losty 1982, 135).

Researching and identifying paintings from Awadh during the early days of its inception is extremely difficult as there is a distinct overlap between the styles of Mughal painting produced in Delhi and the later Mughal style in Awadh as one might expect. Artists effectively transported the popular images from Delhi to their new audiences in Awadh, where they were readily absorbed and slavishly imitated by the younger generations of fledgling artists.

Scholarly publications, in particular catalogues of the collections of the Chester Beatty Library (Leach 1995), the British Library (Falk and Archer 1981), and New York Public Library (Schmitz 1992) to name but a few, have facilitated the research of the general style of painting from Awadh. These publications have offered information on the named artists, the approximate date of production, as well as identifying the subject matter or the sitter. However, even after the arduous task of scouring through public and private institutions for paintings that can be identified as products of Awadh, it is only possible to construct a partial framework of the Awadhi style. The understanding of this historic development has additionally been impeded by private collectors who have acquired unpublished art works that may shed light on the patronage of the Nawabs of Awadh, or the high ranking courtier that is pictured in Gobind Singh's portrait (figure 23) who also appears to be a significant patron. During

the 1960s in particular, the international art market was flooded with paintings from Awadh that have long since disappeared into the hands of dealers and private collectors and are difficult to trace. Another problem faced in constructing a framework is that there is always the possibility that scholars have incorrectly identified and published paintings as products of Awadh. One such group of paintings in particular which have been mistakenly attributed to the 'provincial Mughal' school in Awadh during the mid eighteenth century have been illustrated in the publication of the 'St. Petersburg Muraqqa'.

In the 1990s, a group of scholars working on the legendary 'St. Petersburg Muraqqa', a reconstructed album of sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth century Indian and Persian miniatures and specimens of calligraphy, identified a group of the paintings as products of the Awadh court. Scholars including Welch, Haidar and Bailey believed that several of the paintings that demonstrated a 'vigorous revival of European style pictures with Christian subjects' were undoubtedly products of the Nawabi court (Akimushkin 1996, 68). Unfortunately, none of the scholars elaborated any further information on how these works can be identified as products of Awadh. One general conclusion is that they hastily drew their remarks from the fact that the subject matter had been extremely popular in Awadh. Furthermore, they do not allude to how or why these works could have been produced in Awadh prior to Nadir Shah's invasion of Delhi in 1739. Essentially, by identifying these paintings in the St. Petersburg album as originating in Awadhi ateliers, these eminent art historians and scholars have placed a flourishing painting tradition being fully established prior to the reign of Shuja ud-Daula (r. 1754-75); however, they neither provide us with visual or factual evidence to substantiate this fact.

As previously mentioned in the preceding chapter, the period of Muhammad Shah breathed life back into the tradition of Mughal painting that had been in decline since the reign of Aurangzeb. Mughal artists of the imperial atelier were renowned for their exquisite large format illustrations that primarily focused on illustrating emperors at leisure and scenes from within the *zenana*. McInerney's (2003, 17) observation that art of this period was suggestive of escapism is justified through his point that artists expressed 'a relative indifference to natural history or botanical subjects; literary, poetical, or historical subjects; and the military or battle subjects that played such an important role in court painting during the reigns of Akbar, Jahangir, and Shah Jahan.'

A key feature of the mid-eighteenth style is the use of a simple colour scheme juxtaposed with the attention to a schematic presentation of architecture and space, with

a specific emphasis on the openness of space within compositions. While the majority of artists selected a neutral colour palette that focused on variations of white and greys, the artist Chitarman's revolutionary depiction of skies, with brilliant hues of orange, purple and blue with cloud outlined with gold, inspired his followers (McInerney 2003, 23). 'Muhammad Shah in a palanquin' shows evidence of the attention to detail of architecture, the representation of space and the style of skies coined by Chitarman (figure 43).

Although the artists of Muhammad Shah's atelier made a significant advancement in style during the next few decades, Mughal painting in Delhi in this period was unremarkable. From 1748 to 1758, artists who remained in Delhi composed simple portrait studies and were predominantly concerned with romantic scenes, including glimpses inside the *zenana* and *ragamala* pictures showing forlorn women sitting on terraces under a night sky. There was generally a lack of advancement or achievement by artists during this brief period.

In researching the artistic traditions of the provincial Mughal towns of Lucknow, Faizabad, Bareilly, Farrukhabad, and Murshidabad, it is difficult to state with certainty if there was a pre-existing artistic tradition prior to the arrival of the Mughal appointed governors. Murshidabad was the earliest of the provincial courts to show evidence of the Mughal style during the reign of Alivardi Khan (r. 1740-56) (Skelton 1959, 10). In the case of Lucknow and Faizabad, it was only during the reign of Shuja ud-Daula (r. 1754-75) that paintings influenced by the Mughal style began to emerge. The Farrukhabad and Bareilly situation has yet to be clarified; it is believed that under the patronage of either or both Ahmad Khan Bangash and Hafiz Rehmat Khan (fl. 1770s) a derivative Mughal style appeared for a short duration.[38] Ultimately, local artists absorbed different aspects of the imperial tradition that resulted in the formation of independent variations of the Mughal style unique to each locale.

While McInerney (2003, 30) only mentions that the Delhi artists Nidha Mal, Chitarman and Hunhar relocated to Awadh, through viewing the collections of paintings that were produced in Lucknow and Faizabad it becomes apparent that Muhammad Afzal, Muhammad Faquirullah Khan and Mir Kalan Khan must also have made their way to the region from Delhi. Moving to Awadh, these artists were able to impart their

[38] Falk and Archer (1981, 20) believe that a new idiom emerged in Farrukhabad under the patronage of Ahmad Khan Bangash. This is based on Richard Johnson acquisition of several paintings from Bangash. However, it is more likely that this style emerged under the patronage of another Rohilla chief, Hafiz Rehmat Khan, who lived in the nearby town of Bareilly. Hafiz Rehmat Khan was known for his extensive library, which was later looted by British officers (Losty 1982, 135).

knowledge of the latest trends in Mughal painting to younger generations of artists. Rather than the traditional Muhammad Shah period 'escapist' paintings, artists courageously looked at other genres that had been popular in the seventeenth century. In terms of portraiture, artists produced studies of the local politicians and governors such as Shuja ud-Daula, courtiers, women and courtesans, as well as religious saints. Artists also produced illustrations documenting battle scenes and literary tales.. Awadh artists also popularised *ragamala* paintings, which depicted particular musical modes often accompanied by texts to identify each mode. Even Hindu mythology was of interest and artists illustrated the incarnations of Vishnu, manifestations of Devi, even scenes of Radha and Krishna. In recognition of one of the classic Mughal genres that had become fashionable by the artist Mansur in the seventeenth century, Awadhi artists began to illustrate the flora and fauna of the region.

Aside from these traditional subject matters, it has been suggested by Gauvin Bailey (Akimushkin 1996, 68) that, in the eighteenth century, there was a 'vigorous revival of European style pictures with Christian subjects at the court of Nawab of Awadh [Shuja ud-Daula].' Bailey looks exclusively at several miniature paintings in the 'St. Petersburg' album to make his case without considering the broader scope of Awadhi painting. Writing about four works, 'Isabel de Borbon Queen of Spain' (figure 50), two versions of 'Holy family with attendants' (figure 51), and a portrait of the Virgin Mary (figure 49), Bailey insists that these paintings 'demonstrate[s] a persistent interest in European subjects almost two centuries after Akbar'. However, one questions this 'revival' of Christian subject matter and iconography in Awadh during Shuja ud-Daula's reign. In researching Awadhi painting in general, local artists such as Mir Kalan Khan were interested in European subjects, though not in a religious or spiritual context. While it is unclear exactly where and when these works were produced, Bailey's limited argument does not offer any references or supporting evidence to link these examples directly to Lucknow and Shuja ud-Daula, or information that could assist in further research.

There has been some question regarding the availability of European prints and engravings in Awadh during the reign of Shuja ud-Daula. Adding to the conundrum of the religious paintings in the St. Petersburg album, there are two further albums that were assembled in northern India in the eighteenth century that consist of specimens of western prints and engravings. In the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum, there are two albums known respectively as the small Clive album and the large Clive album that were acquired by Robert Clive in approximately 1765-67; as previously mentioned,

it believed that these albums were a gift from Shuja ud-Daula.[39] While this connection is yet to be confirmed, inside these albums are numerous examples of European prints and engravings, including specimens of Christian iconography, alongside Mughal and Deccani paintings. Although these albums have yet to be studied at length, they raise the question of whether these studies were in fact present in Awadh and if indeed artists were experimenting with religious iconography. The striking difference between the works in the Clive albums and the St. Petersburg album is that, in general, the European prints and engravings are crudely over-painted and not refined examples as seen in the St. Petersburg leaves (figure 52).[40] This leads us to question if in fact the 'provincial Mughal works from Awadh' were actually produced at a much earlier date, such as the Akbar period in which there was a strong interest in Christian iconography due to the presence of European and Portuguese visitors at the Mughal court. The quality and refinement of these paintings show similarities to the work of the artists Basawan and Kesu Das (figure 53).

Mir Kalan Khan, Mihr Chand, and a few unidentified artists experimented with ideas presented to them from western art. They copied portraits of European men and women, courtesans, as well as pastoral landscape settings. For Mihr Chand and his contemporaries, it was the new techniques presented in western examples that would enrapture their attention. It is this point that assists in distinguishing between later Mughal paintings produced in Delhi and Awadh.

In terms of style, the early period of painting in Awadh (late 1750s-1760s) was fairly indistinguishable to the Mughal style of Delhi. By the 1770s, it was common for Awadhi artists to use less saturated pigments, a warmer colour palette, and a matured approach to representing space within the image. In particular, Mihr Chand's awareness of the technique of aerial perspective, that he used to create the illusion of distance within his paintings, would be replicated by many of his followers and would become a common trademark of Awadhi painting.

While a variation of the Mughal style materialised in Lucknow and Faizabad, distinctive styles also emerged in Farrukhabad, Bareilly and Murshidabad. These styles are important to note as a means to understand the stylistic development of the late Mughal style. Artists in Murshidabad had become aware of the Mughal style much earlier than the artists in Lucknow and Faizabad. In Murshidabad, artists began to experiment with the Mughal style during the reigns of Alivardi Khan (r. 1740-56), Mir

[39] Victoria & Albert Museum, Handlist of Paintings in the Department of South Asia.
[40] The Clive albums have not been studied at length by scholars. Only select folios have been published in various publications.

Jafar (r. 1757-60), and Mir Qasim Khan (r. 1760-63). This style of painting developed into a distinctive style that culminated in 1760. From the onset, the Murshidabad style reflected the influence of the Delhi style in the artist's choice of sombre colours and formal elegance (Pal 2001). Subject matters included portraiture, hunting scenes, *ragamala* painting, and illustrations to accompany fables and narratives, as well as Hindu mythology.

The early phase of Murshidabad painting (1750s-1760s) shows a striking similarity with the art of Delhi. In general, artists heavily used shades of grey and white to illustrate figures and settings (Pal 2001, 142-43). With artists including Hunhar, who accompanied Ali Gauhar's entourage to Murshidabad in 1759, relocating to the Mughal provinces, it would come as no surprise that his knowledge of the most recent trends in painting was transmitted to artists in the region. Looking at the following portrait of 'Mir Jafar, Nawab of Murshidabad, receives a kneeling petitioner' that was produced in Murshidabad, we see a clear reflection of the Delhi style (figure 54). This unidentified artist embraced the multi-coloured sky and cloud formations favoured by Hunhar and Chitarman, who were both trained in Delhi.

Portraits produced in Murshidabad in the mid-eighteenth century are distinctive in style from the prevailing Delhi idiom. Murshidabad artists commonly illustrated individuals in profile; each figure had distinct fish-shaped eyes, perfectly formed jet-black eyebrows, pale complexions with a greyish tinge, and their bodies were rather squat in character. Illustrations in the *Dastur-i Himmat* provide an excellent example of the early Murshidabad style of the 1750s and 1760s (figure 55) (Leach 1995, 623). In the following illustration, the artist employed a high horizon that was curvilinear in shape (instead of perfectly horizontal) that was dotted with trees and stark white buildings in the distance. The Murshidabad style typically uses distinctive lines to render buildings, the landscape, and the outlines of the stumpy figures in the scene.

While the influence of the Delhi style is apparent in Murshidabad during the mid 1760s, there was a sort of counter-influence between Awadh and Murshidabad. After the death of Alivardi Khan, the overall Murshidabad painting style changed. The most noticeable change was to the colour palette. There was an increased feeling of sensuousness or warmth that has been attributed to the influence of artists from Lucknow who brought with them their 'proclivity for warmer colours and earthy figures' (Pal 2001, 143). As it has been suggested that Bengali (from Murshidabad and

Patna) and Awadhi (Lucknow and Faizabad) artists were both present in Allahabad in 1765, it would have been an ideal time for these artists to exchange ideas.[41]

In the nearby regions of Farrukhabad and Bareilly, also situated within the province of Awadh, local artists were not as innovative as their neighbours. Instead, under the patronage of the Rohilla chiefs Ahmad Khan Bangash and Hafiz Rehmat Khan, a derivative of the Mughal style appeared and was uniquely independent in style as the art of Faizabad and later Lucknow. There is limited information on the regional style and requires further study. Falk and Archer (1981, 189) succinctly described the Farrukhabad style:

> Common to all these paintings is the pictorial style, which features a rather loose assemblage of figures with an imprecise placing of the straight lines of architecture. The female figures conform to a regular standard with sharply prominent noses, pinched mouths and large areas of cheek. Their choice of subject concentrates on idyllic scenes, accentuated by the elongation of figures, and the style has a particular emphasis on shades of yellow and yellow-green.

An excellent example of the work produced in Farrukhabad, is a painting entitled 'A princess and her companions enjoying a terrace ambiance' (figure 56). In this particular scene, a group of women stand on a terrace (each delineated in their elongated form, with down-pointed noses) with an exquisite yellow-green landscape with shades of gold in the background.

a. The first generation of Awadhi artists

As we have already established, the earliest artists who appeared in Awadh originated from Delhi during the mid-eighteenth century. Until now, there has not been any systematic approach to categorise paintings from Awadh. In the following sections, the earliest artists who arrived in Awadh will be categorised as the 'first generation'. Their apprentices and children fall into the 'second generation'. From the general description on the Awadh style of painting, it is the work of the first generation of artists that shows an indiscernible difference from the Delhi style. Thus, the subject matter often provides some clue of where these works were produced. The work of the second

[41] This will be further discussed in the follow section on Mihr Chand and the Murshidabad artist Dip Chand.

generation of artists exhibits the transformation from the Delhi style to the distinct Awadhi style.

The first generation of artists included Nidha Mal (fl. 1735-75), Hunhar (fl. 1740-80), Muhammad Faquirullah Khan (fl. 1720-70), Muhammad Afzal (fl. 1740-80) and Mir Kalan Khan (fl. 1735-70), names all familiar from the court of Muhammad Shah.[42] In this group, the artist Nidha Mal's illustrations provide the earliest specimens of portraiture of Nawab Shuja ud-Daula and document his physiognomy from his twenties (figure 28). This early composition entitled 'An Awadhi official, probably Shuja ud-Daula, receives a Mughal petitioner, followed the *jharoka* style. Shuja ud-Daula is pictured in profile at the age of about twenty-two as a slender young man, clean shaven aside from his moustache. While later portraits of the ruler consistently picture him wearing a traditional Awadhi-style turban with a crescent-shaped band, in this early portrait he is illustrated in a Mughal cap. Nidha Mal's subsequent composition, 'An Awadhi nobleman, probably Shuja ud-Daula, with five ladies of the harem watching entertainers in a water garden', dated 1755-65, was more likely to be produced in the 1750s, as the artist again selected to illustrate him clean shaven and slender (figure 29) (Schmitz 2002, 5).

Hunhar, or Puran Nath, was another Delhi trained artist to settle in Lucknow. Hunhar, greatly influenced by the artist Chitarman, also followed his mentor's style of the multi-hued skies with circular clouds. While Nidha Mal arrived directly from Delhi, Hunhar is believed to have taken a different route. Skelton has suggested that Hunhar accompanied Prince Ali Gauhar in 1759 (Shah Alam II) to Murshidabad where he produced a scene 'Mir Jafar and his son Miran on horseback with the Bengal army forming a long cavalcade in the background' (Skelton 1959, 16).[43] Hunhar's presence in Murshidabad influenced at least one local artist to follow in his footsteps and produce 'Mir Jafar receives a kneeling petitioner' which reflected the Delhi style multicoloured sky (figure 54). Relocating to Lucknow in the early 1760s, Hunhar may have been approaching the age of retirement.

Muhammad Faquirullah Khan, or simply Faquirullah, also flourished under Muhammad Shah's patronage. He is known for his illustration of 'Muhammad Shah in a palanquin with attendants' (figure 57). By the early 1760s, Faquirullah relocated to

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[42] Although McInereny (2002, 30-31) suggested that Chitarman also settled in Awadh, there is no visual evidence to support this.

[43] Skelton also notes that there is a seal of ownership on the reverse that indicates this work was owned by Hidayatullah Khan (the Vizir of Prince Ali Gauhar) and dated 1173 AH (1759 AD). Victoria & Albert Museum, 13-1911. Skelton's article did not include an illustration of Hunhar's work, nor could the work be located.

Lucknow. Surprisingly, after leaving Delhi, his 'style radically changed from a clean austere type (under Muhammad Shah) to a decorative style designed to appeal to Lucknow urbanites' (Leach 1995, 685-86). This noticeable change is apparent in his illustrations of women frolicking outdoors in which he presented the women with elongated forms and sharp, down-pointed noses (figure 58). Of interest, his new approach was very similar to the style seen in Farrukhabad during the 1770s. In all probability, Faquirullah may have spent time in Farrukhabad in the early 1760s. Nonetheless, during his time in Lucknow, he collaborated with Fath Chand to produce a series of *ragamala* illustrations.[44] Comparing the two artists, Skelton wrote:

> Fateh Chand has a harder, more precise manner than Faquirullah and a more refined colour sense. His modelling is subtler and despite the precision of drawing his modelling is often quite soft in giving the roundness of face or limb or in the rendering of drapery. He uses the greens and mauves found in Faquirullah's work but other colours are not so strident. Folds and creases are not shown with lines as in Faquirullah's Ramakali and they are much better understood than say the man's *jama* in Ramakali. The heads are in proportion to the bodies but Faquirullah tends to make them too large. Perhaps Faquirullah was a pupil of Fateh Chand (Skelton 1970).

Another Delhi artist to settle in Lucknow was Muhammad Afzal; McInerney (2002, 20) classified Afzal as a second rank artist of Muhammad Shah's atelier. Unfortunately, there is limited information on his early career and style. His later paintings are reflective of a combination of the Delhi and Awadhi styles. Afzal's 'Ladies watching a dancer on a terrace' is noteworthy; on close inspection, the background scene bears a strong resemblance to Mihr Chand's approach to landscapes (figure 57). In the foreground, Afzal pictured a group of dancers performing in the evening, on a candle-lit terrace. In the background, Afzal drew a low horizon point, inserted a river to create distance, and employed the technique of aerial perspective to illustrate the distant landscape with small trees. Perhaps he adapted Mihr Chand's trademark for his terrace scene. As this is the only known work by Afzal to use Mihr Chand's style, it is possible that he either collaborated with Mihr Chand or simply experimented with his model. It can also be suggested that Muhammad Afzal assisted Mihr Chand's studio with adding backgrounds to already exisiting paintings, a topic that will be explored in detail in Chapter 4. Towards the latter part of Afzal's career, he worked for the British East India Company officer Richard Johnson.[45]

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[44] Sotheby's, July 1973, Lots 15 and 16

[45] Muhammad Afzal's association with Richard Johnson will be discussed further towards the end of this chapter.

As compared to the previously mentioned artists, one of the more intriguing Delhi artists to have flourished in Awadh is the artist Mir Kalan Khan (fl. c. 1735-70). McInerney's (2002, 20) article on the artists of Muhammad Shah's atelier offers a cursory glance at the career of Mir Kalan Khan and briefly mentions that he was a protégé of Govardhan. Mir Kalan Khan has been previously mentioned in Chapter 1 in relation to Nawabi patronage and his work on 'A lion hunt at Allahabad' (figure 27). Several works, including this elaborate illustration, are unsigned and can only be attributed to the artist. In researching Mir Kalan Khan's career, we return to the period of Muhammad Shah and the city of Delhi. Two early works inscribed 'work of Mir Kalan' reflect the artist's preference towards scenes of women at leisure and a hunting scene, both of which were popular topics painted by his contemporaries. The first scene, 'Hunting Deer at Night', has been classified as a Mughal painting and is inscribed with the date 1127 A.H./1734-35 (figure 60) (Akimushkin 1996, plate 214). Pictured on the right are two Mughal rulers (possibly Muhammad Shah and Ahmad Shah), surrounded by attendants who prepare for the hunt. On the left, on the opposite side of the hill, two *bhils* or tribals seek deer for the hunt. The second early work, by Mir Kalan Khan inscribed with the date 1734-35, has an elaborate compositional format. In the 'Celebration of *Holi* inside the harem', Khan illustrates in the upper half of the folio a princess receiving a young woman with their attendants waiting with offerings of food and wine (figure 61). In the lower half of the composition, there is bustling activity as women are gathered, dancing, playing music, and dousing one another with coloured water and smearing the dyes across their cohort's faces. From the activity inside the women's quarters, it can be suggested that they were celebrating the festival of *Holi*.

Mir Kalan Khan's departure from Delhi to the Mughal provinces cannot be concretely traced. From the following paintings, it is possible to create a timeline and pinpoint his movements. The first painting, 'A lion hunt in Allahabad' (figure 27), places the artist in the city of Allahabad in approximately 1759-60, when the Ali Gauhar proclaimed himself Emperor Shah Alam II and appointed Shuja ud-Daula as the Wazir. The next painting, recently discovered and unpublished, is attributed to Mir Kalan Khan and was produced in Lucknow at the time of Asaf ud-Daula's reign. This work is inscribed '*Holi* in the [?] Sheesh Mahal of Nawab Wazir Azam-i Hind Asaf ud-Daula' (figure 62).[46] If this inscription is contemporary to the artwork, then the reference to

[46] The Sheesh Mahal or Shish Mahal is no longer extant, though would have been a private apartment in the palace for the Nawab of Awadh in Lucknow.

Asaf ud-Daula as 'Nawab Wazir' confirms that this illustration was produced during Asaf's reign (r. 1775-97) and offers confirmation that the artist was flourishing in Lucknow after Shuja ud-Daula's death. More importantly, this painting documents Asaf ud-Daula patronage of local artists. Until now, Khan's illustrations could only corroborate his presence in Awadh until the late 1760s. Now it appears that Khan was still working through the mid-1770s as well.

Attributed to Mir Kalan Khan by Robert Skelton, the artist pictured the portly Asaf ud-Daula as well captured the sinuous forms of the ladies dancing on the terrace and playing music. Although this work was produced in the 1770s, it resonates with the style of Khan's illustration of women celebrating *Holi* from the 1730s (figure 61). It is Khan's approach to architecture, which is of great importance, and multi-level terraces with women perched on the edges of upper level platforms and dancing on the roofs of pavilions that will be replayed in the work of Mihr Chand and Faizullah.

Khan's unique approach to painting, as well as his indifference to mainstream Mughal genres such as portraiture, distinguishes him from his contemporaries. In the interim, between working in Allahabad and appearing in Lucknow to illustrate the pleasure-seeking Asaf ud-Daula, it has been suggested that Mir Kalan Khan flourished in Faizabad. The next three works are representative of Khan's interest in moving away from Mughal idioms and taking an eclectic approach to experiment with Safavid, Deccani, Rajput and European styles. Mir Kalan Khan's paintings 'Village life in Kashmir' (figure 63) and 'The death of Farhad' (figure 64) were groundbreaking; these works exhibited his awareness of Flemish and Italian style landscapes that he recreated by using water-based pigments to achieve *sfumato* in the distance. His paintings also showed an awareness of chiaroscuro as well as the play of light sources on the folds of clothing. His figures were typically rounded, or one could even say voluptuous. Clothing was drawn to follow the precise curves of their figures

Mir Kalan Khan's 'Princess watching a maid kill a snake', a reproduction of a seventeenth century Bijapuri painting, also provides insight into the artist's fascination with this non-Mughal idiom (figure 65). Losty contends that Mir Kalan Khan's fascination with Bijapuri painting was more likely to be an idealised vision of an alien society than a direct copy of an original.[47] Khan's Bijapuri painting will be addressed in Chapter 3 and 7, in relation to Mihr Chand's interest in the Bijapur idiom. Khan's approach to the non-Mughal idiom, as well as his fantasy style portrait of Asaf ud-Daula

[47] J. P. Losty, 'Later Period of Mughal Painting', *Grove Art Online* <www.groveart.com>, accessed Nov. 11 2005.

enjoying the dalliance with his harem, are rather important to building up the framework of the Awadh painting tradition. While the majority of the first generation of artists from Delhi was following in the footsteps of the Delhi tradition, Mir Kalan Khan's works were groundbreaking and inspirational for the younger generations of artists including Mihr Chand and Faizullah. Khan's paintings are also extremely important in terms of drawing parallels between Khan and Mihr Chand's careers, as well as providing evidence to document the factors that may have impacted Mihr Chand's stylistic transformation. In the close artistic communities established in Faizabad and Lucknow, it comes as no surprise that artists were readily influencing one another.

Mir Kalan Khan, Nidha Mal, Hunhar, Muhammad Faquirullah Khan and Muhammad Afzal, together these artists can be categorised as the first generation of Awadhi artists. This list, however, is not comprehensive; without doubt, there were other artists who flourished in the region at this time. Through reviewing the paintings of the first generation, we can now move forward and consider the second generation of Awadhi artists. Both in Lucknow (1754-65; 1775 onwards) and Faizabad (1765-75), there were many new artists who worked in the Awadhi or late Mughal idiom. Several of these younger artists were the sons of the Delhi artists and learned about painting directly from their parents. The artist Fateh Chand (who worked with Muhammad Faquirullah Khan) was the son of Rai Dalchand, a pre-eminent Delhi artist who had also worked in Jodhpur, Rajasthan at the court of Maharaja Abhai Singh (Crill 2000, 66). The artist Mohan Singh was the son of Govardhan.[48] In the case of Mihr Chand, we know from his signature that he was the son of the artist Ganga Ram.

Before proceeding to the second generation of Awadhi artists, the artist Faizullah Khan merits the reader's attention. In contrast to the previously mentioned artists, Faizullah Khan's origins are unclear; there is no information available on the location of his training or of his relations, nor can his paintings be dated. Faizullah Khan is known by the attribution '*amal-i faizullah*' which has been discovered on at least two known works. These two works show a fresh or innovative approach to terrace scenes of playful women frolicking inside the *zenana* and enjoying the amusements of dancing and music. Faizullah's masterpieces 'In a harem garden' (figure 66) and 'Heavenly palaces and gardens' (figure 67), show striking similarities with Mir Kalan Khan's '*Holi*

[48] Inscribed on a scene from the illustrated *Iyar-I Danish* (BL APAC, J. 54, 26) manuscript is *amal-i mohan singh valad- govardhan* (the work of Mohan Singh, son of Govardhan) clearly identified the artist's relationship to the senior artist.

in the Sheesh Mahal of Nawab Wazir Asaf ud-Daula' (figure 62), in the approach to perspective and the use of architectural features such as terraces to dynamic multi-level scenes. As Mir Kalan Khan produced this work after Asaf ud-Daula's succession in 1775, it comes as a surprise that Welch would assign Faizullah's to an earlier period, circa 1765. As there is almost no information on Faizullah, aside from the evidence of his paintings, one questions how Welch assumed that it was a product of the 1760s. If in fact Faizullah found success during Shuja ud-Daula's reign, would there not be many more examples of his earlier paintings aside from these terrace scenes? Therefore, it can only be suggested that Faizullah may have been a follower of Mir Kalan Khan and that he elaborated on the terrace scenes during the 1770s and early 1780s.

As in the case of many Awadhi artists, there has been limited scholarly attention given to the works of Faizullah. Leach (1995, 694) has concisely but erroneously classified the artist as a 'rathe timid, but popular' and a 'conservative' artist. In reviewing his masterpiece 'In a harem garden' (figure 66), we are presented with an avant-garde scene in which the artist experimented with single point perspective though on multiple levels to illustrate intricate gardens and marble terraces showing the life inside the harem or *zenana*. One questions how Leach identified this radical use of perspective as 'timid' and 'conservative.' Whilst Faizullah's style can be linked to Mir Kalan Khan's influence, one questions if his style had a direct impact on Mihr Chand. In Chapter 6, this will be addressed.

b. The impact of European patronage and the formation of the independent workshops

Through the collections amassed by European and British officers in Faizabad and Lucknow in this period, it is has been possible to identify the names of the second generation of Awadhi artists. Several of these collectors, in particular Jean Baptiste Gentil, Antoine Polier, and Richard Johnson, commissioned local artists to produce single paintings as well as illustrated manuscripts. By reviewing their collections in particular, we find many signed paintings from which we can assemble a list of the known artists and determine the main characteristics of each of their styles.

Archer (1979) brought to our attention this specific topic of European and British patronage of Awadhi artists during the late eighteenth century. Nonetheless, as the interactions between these two groups still requires further investigation, scholars

have continued to pursue the topic. Jasanoff (2005) and Alam (1986) bring to the reader's attention how the cultural atmosphere in the Lucknow and Faizabad area was conducive for the Europeans to adopt the 'oriental' lifestyle and heighten their appreciation for the fine and literary arts. Accordingly, it is necessary to provide a brief overview of the East India Company and the arrival of Europeans to the subcontinent. From this review, we will understand the rationale for bestowing patronage and collecting visual materials.

The Age of Enlightenment brought forth the Europeans and British to explore the regions in the 'East Indies', a term that referred to the regions of India, Southeast Asia and East Asia. The Portuguese explorer Vasco de Gama, one could say, initiated the interest and exploration of the Indian subcontinent in 1498. Almost a century after Gama's arrival in India in search for 'Christians and spices', British and other European nations embarked on their own voyages to the unknown territories in the East with the realisation that they could prosper from setting up trade routes from the East to the West. With their thirst for knowledge of the unknown, western countries began to establish mercantile organisations or 'companies' that would engage in trade. With the Portuguese already established in India, the British and the Dutch set up their companies known respectively as the British East India Company and the Dutch East India Company or VOC (*Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie*) at the start of the seventeenth century. Almost sixty years later, the French *Compagnie des Indes* arrived in India.

Moving ahead to the eighteenth century, British and French officers were increasingly competitive in order to control specific territories and to obtain monopolies on trade. Although the initial purpose of the East India Company was to focus on trade and profit, rather than conquest and colonisation, they began to re-evaluate their stance in regards to the current political affairs in order to maintain their presence in the region (Lawson 1993, 20). Part of the problem for the British and French was that there were other factions battling for the control of the subcontinent. In fact, the Mughals who had dominated the region since the sixteenth century were slowly losing control of northern India; Persian and Afghan rulers raided the country and usurped Mughal authority. However, during this ambivalent period, the French and British officers would continue to explore the local culture and languages.

Scholars of orientalism and cultural studies have striven to understand this western thirst for knowledge in eighteenth century India. For the French, it was the travel accounts of Bernier and Tavernier that spurred the royal librarian Abbé Jean-Paul

Bignon of the *Bibliothèque du Roi* to acquire 'oriental' manuscripts in Greek, Arabic, Persian, as well as in Indian languages in the first quarter of the eighteenth century (Lafont 2000). While interests in the 'oriental' languages would have predominantly appealed to the scholarly community, in 1727, the French government made a bold decision to make an official request for officers to acquire Indian manuscripts. The French governor of Pondicherry, by the name of Lenoir, led this quest for knowledge (Lafont 2000). Lenoir 'entrusted this work mainly to the French missionaries in India, reputed for their knowledge of Indian languages, both vernacular and classical, who already frequented in the Indian milieu. The French Jesuits, in particular, had begun, right from 1689, the year of their installation in Pondicherry, a systematic study of the Indian languages' (Lafont 2000). These missionaries, part of the *Compagnie des Indes Orientales*, became closely ingrained within the local society and were able to locate and copy numerous manuscripts; at least 287 major Indian works were sent back to France (Lafont 2000). The contribution of one of the Jesuit priests, Father Joseph Tieffenthaler, will be discussed at length in Chapter 4.

Aside from the Jesuits, there were other Frenchmen interested in acquiring manuscripts in Persian and various Indian dialects, dictionaries, and historical accounts. Monsieur Anquetil-Duperron, a private individual not affiliated to the French government, travelled to India from 1758 to 1761, seeking to acquire rare texts. On his return, he brought back to France a collection of 180 Indian manuscripts including an important compilation of letters composed by Abu'l Fazl, the noted court historian of emperor Akbar (Lafont 2000, 97-99).

Another Frenchmen, Jean Baptiste Gentil, is merited for his efforts in commissioning the local artists of Faizabad during the 1760s and 1770s. Unlike Anquetil-Duperron, Gentil had enlisted in the *Compagnie des Indes* as an officer. From the onset of his career in India, his fate was sealed. Serving with General Bussy, who 'was a fine connoisseur of Indian paintings and a close friend of Anquetil-Dupperon' in the Deccan in the 1750s, he became knowledgeable of the fine and literary arts (Graff 1999, 70). Though it was not until he moved to Awadh in 1763, that he personally undertook the challenge in commissioning local artists. This will be discussed at length in the following section.

Unlike their French neighbours, the British did not sponsor an official quest to acquire Indian manuscripts and learn about the local culture. For the British officers, understanding the culture and becoming proficient in the local languages was borne out of the pure need to communicate and to perform their daily activities including trade. In

addition, Alam (Polier 2001, 37) states that 'native texts needed to be collated and translated not merely for social harmony and to bridge the distance between indigenous religious and ethnic communities, but for a variety of reasons concerning both the reinforcement of English political power in India and the European and English rediscovery of their intellectual and cultural past in India.' More importantly, it was through the independent activities of officers such as Charles Wilkins, Nathaniel Halhed, Sir William Jones and Warren Hastings that there were investigations into the 'indigenous texts' and 'knowledge of India' (Polier 2001, 39). As a result, legal, historical and linguistic studies were translated from Sanskrit and Persian into English including *A Code of Gentoo Laws* (1776).

From the 1760s to the late 1780s, British and French officers played an instrumental role in propagating the local artistic traditions in both Faizabad and Lucknow. These officers not only commissioned artwork, they would recruit local artists and establish their own 'workshops'. Without the patronage of such fine men, including Gentil, Polier and Johnson, the Awadhi painting tradition may not have continued to flourish at such a rapid pace.

Atelier of Jean Baptiste Gentil in Faizabad (1763-75)

Gentil (1726-99) commenced his career with the French *Compagnie des Indes* in the Deccan province in 1752. Within a few years, Gentil felt that it would be advantageous to leave the French organisation and seek direct employment with the provincial rulers, firstly with Nawab Mir Qasim of Bengal (r. 1760-63) and later Nawab Shuja ud-Daula of Awadh. Moving to Faizabad, Gentil was appointed as the *aide-de-camp* to Shuja ud-Daula and remained in his service from 1763 to 1775 (Patwardhan 1971, 613). In Faizabad, Gentil supplied the Nawab's army with tactical training to prepare themselves for battles again the British and even against minor factions that threatened Awadh's borders. However, in 1774, by the direct order of the British, Gentil and other French residents were barred from the province. Furthermore, the British prohibited Shuja ud-Daula from allowing any French nationals to reside or to obtain employment in region in Awadh. As a result, Gentil departed from Faizabad during 1774-75 for Southern India and shortly thereafter, in 1778, he returned to France.

In the early years of his stay in India, he was prompted to collect South Asian manuscripts on topics such as theology, religion, history and language for the French

scholars Anquetil-Duperron and Marquess Charles De Bussy. During his stay in India, he assembled a large personal collection of manuscripts and paintings as well as commission several volumes on the history of India. On return to his native France, Gentil donated his collections to the royal libraries.

During his time in Faizabad, it has been suggested the Gentil's close connection to the Nawab afforded him the opportunity to become acquainted with local artists and even employ a small group of artists for approximately twelve years (Richard 1996). Gentil's patronage and connoisseurship lead to the formation of one of the earliest known 'workshops' in the city of Faizabad. Gentil's workshop should not be viewed in parallel to that of the imperial workshops supported by the Mughal emperors; instead, in the provincial towns, workshops consisted of smaller clusters of artists. Through the court of Shuja ud-Daula, Gentil's encountered the artists Nevasi Lal (fl. 1760-75) and Mohan Singh (fl. 1763-82); these are the two main artists of Gentil's workshop.[49] Although Gentil only directly mentions their names, an inscription found in one of his albums *'Névasilal, Mounsingue, etc. au service du Nabob Visir Soudjaatdaula'* indicated the possibility of other artists working in his workshop.

Gentil's workshop focused their attention on providing illustrations that would accompany written texts composed by Gentil or his scribed Mahmud Cassim. Illustrations by the 'Gentil workshop' were included in his *Abrégé historique des souverains de l'indoustan ou Empire Mongol* (BnF), *Receuil de toutes sortes des Dessins sur les Usages et coutumes des Peuples de l'indoustan ou Empire Mogol* (V&A) and a volume of maps entitled *Empire Mogol divisé en 21 soubahs ou gouvernements tiré de differens écrivains du pais en Faisabad en MDCCLXX* (BL APAC).

Gentil's diverse collection of miniatures and illustrations would have required the effort of more than two artists. Compared to Mughal miniatures, the majority of the illustrations executed for Gentil's albums were not very refined or precise. Instead, artists prepared quick studies, painted in watercolours, with visible sketch marks. Figures were typically lithe and often homogeneous; indeed it is only through the costumes that one can differentiate a European from an Indian character. There was

[49] See the handwritten note inside the Gentil album, Victoria & Albert Museum, IS 25-1980 (1-58). Gentil wrote: *'Névasilal, Mounsingue, etc. au service du Nabob Visir Soudjaatdaula Gouverneur general des provinces d'Eléabad et d'Avad.'* [Nevasi Lal, Mohan Singh, etc. in the service of Nawab Vizir Shuja ud-Daula Governor General of the provinces of Allahabad and Awadh.]

clearly a lack of attention to detail. These were intended to be simplistic studies, not requiring embellishment.

There are exceptions within Gentil's collection. His artists executed a series of four paintings that narrate the arrival of emperor Shah Alam II to the city of Allahabad in 1759.[50] These four illustrations utilise the Mughal convention of a narrative network in which the individual scenes narrate the various parts of the event. The four scenes represented included the arrival of Shah Alam II on a palanquin, 'Shuja ud-Daula and Asaf ud-Daula receiving the emperor', 'Nawab Shuja ud-Daula meeting French and British officers at the Allahabad fort' (figure 68), and 'the Allahabad fort'. Assembled together, these four separate paintings would show the panoramic view of the Allahabad fort and the movement of the narrative from left to right. On stylistic grounds, the artist followed the conventions of Mughal painting and illustrated each individual in profile view, represented only the façade of the architecture, and the artist's viewpoint was slightly overhead looking down into the scene. This series of paintings were of a high quality, unlike the previously mentioned illustrations.

Prior to his departure from Awadh in the winter of 1774-75, Gentil had one final commission. In order to obtain a likeness of Nawab Shuja ud-Daula, Gentil requested that his artists produce a series of portraits of the Nawab, based on the portraits painted by the British artist Tilly Kettle in 1772-73. These paintings would be his personal mementos to take back to France. Borrowing four of Kettle's portraits directly from Shuja ud-Daula, Gentil wrote '*J'avais ces quatre tableaux chez moi pour les faire réduire en petit, afin les porter un jour en France.*' The four paintings Gentil referred to included: 'Shuja ud-Daula with his son Asaf ud-Daula', 'Shuja ud-Daula with his seven children', 'Shuja ud-Daula with an English General and an elephant in the distance', and 'Shuja ud-Daula wearing a Maratha costume holding a lance in his hand'.[51] While Gentil claimed that his workshop reproduced all four images, only the portrait 'Shuja ud-Daula with his ten sons' by Nevasi Lal has been located (figure 69). This large format painting is believed to be an almost exact replica of Kettle's original work. Unfortunately, Kettle's work is believed to have been lost.

Nevasi Lal's portrait 'Nawab Shuja ud-Daula with his ten sons' clearly illustrates the compromise the artist made in replicating Tilly Kettle's original. While the artist's fluency with the provincial Mughal colour palette (of monotones of grey and

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[50] BnF, Department des Estampes et Photographie, Od 32 folio 1-4.

[51] Although Gentil wrote 'Shuja ud-Daula with his seven sons,' this painting by Gentil's artist consisted of ten sons. See Gentil (1822, 310-12).

white) is apparent, the artist struggled to replicate the portraits of Shuja ud-Daula's sons in the frontal view, which was not a native convention practised by Mughal painters. Without Gentil's handwritten note on the verso of this painting, 'painted at Faizabad by Nevasilal, Indian artist, 1774', it would not have been possible to identify this work. Auction catalogues in the recent years have attributed several paintings to Nevasi Lal; however, it is difficult to authenticate these works as none of these are signed or ascribed to the artist. In researching the artist's origins and biographical details, there is no further mentioning of the artist aside from Gentil related materials. Furthermore, there is no other evidence of his work with the collection of Richard Johnson who famously snapped up a variety of miniatures and drawings produced in this region during his residence in Lucknow from 1780 to 1782.

Gentil's second artist, Mohan Singh (fl. 1763-82), represents the archetypal case of an artist who was the descendent of a leading artist of Muhammad Shah's court who relocated to Awadh. According to an inscription in an *Iyar-i Danish* manuscript, '*amal-i mohan singh valad-govardhan'*, Mohan Singh was the son of Govardhan, a leading Delhi artist who flourished in the 1720s-40s.[52] Although there is no evidence of Govardhan's move to Awadh, it is possible that Mohan Singh relocated to the region with one of his father's contemporaries. Mohan Singh's paintings in the Gentil collection confirm his presence in Faizabad (1763-75) and later in Lucknow (1780-82) when he worked for Richard Johnson. In the 1780s, Mohan Singh collaborated with other painters in Lucknow including Ghulam Reza, Muhammad Ashiq, Udwat Singh, Sital Das, and Ram Sahai. Mohan Singh's affiliation with Richard Johnson and these other artists will be discussed later.

On returning to France in 1777, Gentil's entire collection, including his personal notes, entered the *Bibliothèque de Roi.* A large oil painting by Tilly Kettle of 'Shuja ud-Daula and Asaf ud-Daula' was donated to the palace at Versailles (figure 68). The Nawab presented this portrait to Gentil before his departure from Faizabad in 1774.

[52] BL APAC J.54,26. Inscribed on a scene from the illustrated *Iyar-i Danish* manuscript is *amal-i mohan singh valad- govardhan* (the work of Mohan Singh, son of Govardhan) clearly identified the artist's relationship to the senior artist.

The workshop of Antoine Polier (1773-86) in Faizabad, Delhi, and Lucknow

Antoine Polier was by far one of the more interesting characters that enlisted with the British East India Company and travelled to Awadh. Polier, a native of Lausanne, Switzerland, arrived in the southern port of Madras in 1758 with a desire to see Asia and visit his uncle Major Paul-Philippe Polier (1711-58) who unfortunately passed away before Polier's arrival. Polier, however, decided to remain in India and seek his fortune and enlisted with the British Company. He initially enlisted as a cadet and saw action on campaigns in the north-western regions of India; on promotion, he worked in the capacity of a surveyor, mapping routes and creating maps to be used by the Company. Shortly thereafter, Polier returned to Calcutta and was promoted to the post of Chief Engineer in charge of reconstructing Fort William (which had been damaged in 1757) from 1760 to 1768 (Phillimore 1959, 364-65). By 1773, Polier was promoted to the status of a major and sent to the province of Awadh in the capacity of a Chief Engineer and Architect to assist the local governor Nawab Shuja ud-Daula in developing fortifications and residential complexes. It is during Polier's residence in the region of Awadh from 1773 to 1780 that the Swiss adventurer began to familiarise himself with the local artists and employ a small group of artists and craftsman. In particular, Polier's employment of the artist known as 'Mihr Chand, son of Ganga Ram' is of vital significance.

In 1772-73, his staff and his two Indian wives accompanied Polier on the journey to Faizabad where he established his new residence. Polier, having an interest in Indian decorative and fine arts, was already acquainted with local artisans and immediately hired Mihr Chand to join his household. Research into Polier's connection to Mihr Chand has been made possible by Polier's (2001) personal correspondence to the artist, which offers extensive information on his interest in South Asian painting, his patronage of local artists, and his contact with and sources of rare paintings. Polier's correspondence is extremely important as it the earliest known document on the artists working in Awadh during the eighteenth century and on western patronage. Furthermore, Polier's letters provide an insight on the artist Mihr Chand and confirm his presence in Faizabad and Delhi. These letters also mention specific works of art and offer the exact dates of execution.

Polier's 'workshop' in Faizabad consisted of Mihr Chand as the head artist, a second artist by the name of Duli Chand, as well as an artist specifically employed to

design the borders or illuminations surrounding each painting.[53] In addition, there was a binder who assembled the individual folios into leather bound albums. Polier's workshop was instructed to follow their patron's meticulous instructions and ultimately produced at least fifteen albums, bound in leather, consisting of miniature paintings and calligraphy from 1773-86.[54] Although there are numerous works ascribed to the artist, he was not the only artist represented in the Polier albums. These albums also included various (signed and unsigned) Mughal, Rajput, and Deccani miniatures (dating from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries) as well as various specimens of calligraphy. Polier purchased paintings through agents as well as received works through his acquaintances. Shah Alam II presented Polier with one album, now in the collection of the Museum fur Islamische Kunst. According to Polier's letters (2001, folio 332b), Mir Sulaiman Khan of Murshidabad (Polier 2001, folio 332b) was the source for some of his paintings.

The bulk of the Polier albums include an illuminated frontispiece, with an inscription in Persian providing details of Polier's ownership and the contents of the album. (figure 71)[55] Inside the albums, each folio is decorated with a distinctive border. The designs of these borders assists in identifying albums or loose folios to the Polier 'workshop'. The first style: the painting is set in centre, immediately surrounded by a narrow blue border with gold leaf design, followed by a wide border with a multicolour Florentine floral motif (figure 72) set against a white background, and lastly against folio's edge there is another narrow blue border with gold leaf design. The second style followed this similar pattern; instead the narrow borders were filled with a salmon colour and the wide inner border followed a traditional Persian convention of animals and floral vines drawn in gold against a background of either a dark blue or green colour (figure 73). As loose folios with these distinctive style borders have appeared at auctions since the 1950s, it is highly likely that there were other albums in Polier's original collection which have long since been dispersed.

Viewing the paintings in the Polier albums, it is clearly apparent that Mihr Chand and his studio were more experimental as compared to their contemporaries. Mihr Chand's avant-garde topographical drawings of the Mughal landmarks exemplified the artist's rational approach towards western perspective, something his

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[53] The name Duli Chand was translated by Alam & Alavi (Polier 2001). There is a possibility that this has been incorrectly translated. In reviewing the Polier albums in Berlin, there are no paintings ascribed to an artist by the name of 'Duli Chand'.

[54] See Appendix IV for a list of albums in Polier's original collection.

[55] The frontispieces will be discussed in Chapter 3.

contemporaries were not yet experimenting with. Mihr Chand also promoted a new style of landscape setting, the 'Awadh landscape', which would be adopted by his contemporaries as well as future Awadhi artists. This new landscape used aerial perspective to denote spatial recession in the background setting.

Researching Polier's collection, we often find duplicate or multiple copies of the same illustration. As Polier often presented his friends and acquaintances with paintings as gifts, it is likely that he requested his workshop to create additional copies so that he could keep one for himself and present the others to his friends. In 1786, Polier presented Lady Coote, the wife of Sir Eyre Coote (a general in the East India Company and his superior) with a large format album consisting of portraits of Aurangzeb, Shah Alam II, and Shuja ud-Daula, as well as elaborate *darbar* scenes, illustrations of festivities inside the palace and harem, and of the architectural landmarks of India. It is highly likely that Polier requested his artists to produce these images in the larger format and pasted on one side of a folio before they were bound, so that it would facilitate framing the illustrations at a later date. Polier also presented the British artist Ozias Humphrey, a visitor to Lucknow in the 1780s, with a set of illustrations depicting life inside the palace and the elaborate Mughal style gardens.

Polier's collection, as compared to Gentil's, served a different purpose. Instead of acting as a picture book recording the memories and specific events, Polier was more interested in obtaining portraits of rulers (Mughal and provincial governors), Mughal masterpieces, as well as topographical views. Gentil's collection demonstrated a preference for Mughal history and ethnographical studies of the people of India.

On returning to Europe in the late 1780s, Polier's decision to break up his entire collection attracted noted bibliophiles such as Alexander Pote and William Beckford. Pote acquired the majority of Polier's Sanskrit and Hindi texts and subsequently donated the collection to King's College Library at Cambridge, while Beckford purchased numerous albums containing miniature paintings. Beckford's collection was passed to his son-in-law Alexander Hamilton and formed a part of the Hamilton Palace Library in Scotland. In 1882, the Hamilton Collection was put up for sale and many of the albums of miniature paintings were acquired by the *Museum für Völkerkunde* in Berlin. It is these albums, with a direct provenance to Antoine Polier, that are now in the collections of the Museum for Indian and Museum für Islamische Kunst in Berlin.

Richard Johnson in Lucknow (1780-82)

British and European newcomers to the region of Awadh were immediately admitted to the intimate circles of Antoine Polier and his associates if they expressed an interest in Persian, Sanskrit, and Mughal arts and literature. The transfer of the Nawabi court from Faizabad to Lucknow immediately following the death of Shuja ud-Daula in 1775 was the main impetus to follow Asaf ud-Daula to his new capital. Establishing their new residences along the banks of the Goomti River, Antoine Polier and Claude Martin's homes soon became the epicentre of cultural activity for Europeans. On arriving to Lucknow, Richard Johnson was warmly admitted to their circle.

Richard Johnson (1753-1807) arrived in Calcutta in 1770 and was employed in the Bengal Civil Service as a writer. By 1772, Johnson had been promoted to the position of Assistant to the Governor-General of India, Warren Hastings. His elevated rank provided him the opportunity to socialise with Hastings' inner circle including associates such as Sir Elijah Impey who, along with Hastings, were collectors of South Asian ephemera and paintings (Falk and Archer 1981, 15). Through the guidance of his new associates, Johnson began to assemble his personal collection. From 1780 to 1782, Johnson was assigned to Lucknow as the Assistant to the Resident Nathanial Middleton. In Lucknow, he joined the ranks of Gentil and Polier as a collector and connoisseur of South Asian painting and manuscripts in Awadh.

During his time in India, Johnson assembled an enormous collection of manuscripts and miniature paintings. Although Johnson acquired fine examples of early Mughal and Deccani paintings, the bulk of his collection consisted of Awadhi works. Whilst living in Lucknow, John commissioned commissioned at least seven local artists to prepare illustrations to literary texts, such as the *Iyar-i Danish*, and *ragamala* paintings (Falk and Archer 1981, 15). In addition, he acquired works Mihr Chand and Mir Kalan Khan. On returning to England, Johnson's extensive collection, consisting of seventy-three bound albums, were sold to the India House Library in 1807 for 3,000 guineas (Falk and Archer 1981, 26). These albums are now in the collection of the British Library in London.

The artists responsible for the *ragamala* and *Iyar-i Danish* illustrations included Mohan Singh (fl. 1763-82), Ghulam Reza (fl. 1780-82), Gobind Singh (fl. 1775-82),[56]

[56] Falk and Archer (1981) give the approximate date in which Gobind Singh flourished as 1775-85. However, as Gobind Singh's illustration of 'Shuja ud-Daula celebrating holi' would have been produced during the Nawab's reign, it is possible to state that he flourished from approximately 1765-82.

Muhammad Ashiq (fl. 1780-82), Udwat Singh (fl. 1780-82), Sital Das (fl. 1780-82), and Ram Sahai (fl. 1760-82). While many of these artists primarily worked in Lucknow, Mohan Singh (who was previously seen working for Gentil in Faizabad) and Ram Sahai travelled from Faizabad to Lucknow around the time of Asaf ud-Daula's departure. In viewing the miniature paintings and coloured drawings prepared for Richard Johnson, it is clearly apparent that these artists were trained in the Mughal idiom by the artists of the Muhammad Shah period. Briefly turning to several of Johnson's artists and reviewing their work, this becomes clear to the viewer.

Gobind Singh was one of the more prolific artists to have been employed by Richard Johnson. Two different inscriptions identify Singh's work: *'amal-i gobind singh musavvir'* (the work of the painter Gobind Singh) and *'amal-i gobind singh shauquin'* (the work of the passionate Gobind Singh). The first signature can be found on at least sixteen *ragamala* paintings as well as a single painting in the *Iyar-i Danish* manuscript.[57] The second signature is found on his superb illustration of Shuja ud-Daula (figure 23). Gobind Singh is known primarily through his paintings in Johnson's collection and it is very likely that a Delhi artist who relocated to Awadh trained him in the Mughal style. While Gobind Singh follows the Mughal style of multi-hued skies, his approach to the treatment of landscape, especially the rounded miniature trees in the distance, are reminiscent of Mihr Chand's provincial Mughal approach. However, his depiction of landscapes lacks the consideration of shadows that plays an increasing part in the provincial Mughal style in Awadh.

Unlike Gobind Singh, Sital Das' work in the Johnson collection was not as prolific. Sital Das utilised two different signatures *'amal-i sital das musavvir'* (work of the painter Sital Das) and *'amal-i sital das'* (work of Sital Das). Sital Das appears in Lucknow by the 1770s. His style typically reflects his use of a higher horizon point and multi-hued skies, consistent with the Mughal style. Sital Das also collaborated on the *Iyar-i Danish* manuscript and his work was more refined and precise than the work of the other artists. Sital Das' son followed in his footsteps and is known by a portrait study, 'Son of Bhagath by the son of Sital Das' (figure 74).

In the late eighteenth century, European patronage upheld the tradition of painting in the cities of Faizabad and Lucknow. Although artists were quick to seek patronage and financial support from the foreigners, there was still a high probability that artists were able to find support from local nobility and possibly members of the

[57] BL APAC, J.42,20-36; J.54,9.

Nawab's family. Aside from the artists affiliated to patrons such as Gentil, Polier and Johnson, there were artists prospering in the region who might not have had the direct support of these patrons. At least two artists, Bahadur Singh and Fateh Chand, were familiar with the work of Mihr Chand and, as we will see in the following sections, it was highly likely that some artists were either collectively working or provided their contemporaries with new images to replicate.

CHAPTER 3

The artist Mihr Chand, son of Ganga Ram (fl. 1759-86)

As discussed in the previous chapters, the cities of Lucknow (1754-65 and 1775 onwards) and Faizabad (1765-75) witnessed a resurgence of the Mughal style of painting in the second half of the eighteenth century, which came about as a result of the dissipation of artists from Delhi to Awadh. In turn, the pre-eminent artists of Delhi imparted their knowledge and skills to younger generations of artists, igniting a form of painting that we are now able to recognise as the late Mughal style in Awadh. While the preceding chapter offers a general discussion on the development of the Awadhi style and the leading artists working in Lucknow and Faizabad, this chapter will focus on the artist Mihr Chand. Mihr Chand has been heralded as one of the most influential artists of this generation and is known foremost for his masterpieces that were collected by Antoine Polier.[58] This chapter will outline the phases in Mihr Chand's career as well as highlight his nouveau approaches to painting; it is the artist's avant-garde style that sets apart Mihr Chand from his contemporaries.

1. Biographical details

Art historians focusing on Mughal and Rajput painting have often struggled to identify an artist's birthplace, his lineage, the location where an artist spent his formative years and even the name of the master artist with whom he studied under. Mihr Chand's case is somewhat exceptional as his signature or attribution offers some indication of his background. A large portion of Mihr Chand's works can be located in albums commissioned by Antoine Polier and are signed. A few of Mihr Chand's works were signed '*amal-i mihr chand*' (work of Mihr Chand). However, the majority of his works were signed '*amal-i mihr chand pesar ganga ram*' (work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram) (figure 75). In using the phrase, 'son of Ganga Ram', the artist directly implied that he was the son of the artist Ganga Ram. Mughal artists commonly used this format, 'son of' to delineate that they were directly related to another esteemed artist. Mihr Chand's name also provides insight into his religious affiliation - in this case, a follower of Hinduism. His religious affiliation did not impede obtaining employment, as it was common for Hindu artists to work for Muslim patrons.

[58] See Appendix IV.

The information presented in Mihr Chand's signature provides clues from which one can begin to explore the artist's lineage and determine if his father directly disseminated his artistic style to his son. From searching for possible candidates named 'Ganga Ram' who flourished in the middle of the eighteenth century, two artists have been found. The first artist, known from an attribution '*amal-i Ganga Ram mussawir*' (work of Ganga Ram, artist), produced a portrait of 'Akbar holding a jewelled plume' (figure 76). According to Verma (1994, 158), this particular Ganga Ram was the father of Mihr Chand. This portrait, recently found in the collection of Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, is reflective of the rigid portraiture style of the early eighteenth century.[59] A second portrait of a 'Bearded Mughal officer', attributed to Ganga Ram by Linda Leach, also exhibits an austere and lacklustre style (figure 77). In validating this Ganga Ram as Mihr Chand's father, the scholar Leach (1995, 656) wrote:

> Much of the artist's attitude and style can probably be related to his father Ganga Ram who was also a painter; for example, his regard for tradition is surely due in part to the fact that his own occupation was hereditary. Ganga Ram is known only by a few surviving works, but these seem to indicate loyalty to an old imperial ideal which his son carried further; the more creative Mihr Chand attempted a major stylistic revival of faded imperial glories. His father Ganga Ram's works are without the mannerisms and idiosyncrasies so popular with a jaded clientele. Like his father, Mihr Chand was generally a straightforward artist, more serious-minded than others of his own age.

Unfortunately, Ganga Ram's two portrait studies do not offer enough information to extrapolate a connection between this artist and Mihr Chand.

Robert Skelton (2004) suggests an alternative Ganga Ram. The second Ganga Ram worked in the *thikana* of Kelwa in western Rajasthan during the 1740s. As a Rajasthani artist, Ganga Ram was notorious for his horrific and often sadistic images portraying crimes of passion (Topsfield 2002, 212).[60] Two works exhibiting his perverse mentality include 'Yogis fighting' (figure 78) and 'Murder in town' (figure 79). As Ganga Ram's paintings were composed in this unique idiom from western Rajasthan, one would expect Mihr Chand's paintings to reflect this influence, especially during his early years. However, Mihr Chand's paintings were more formal and rigid, consistent with the 'imperial' Mughal style and unlike the approach of Ganga Ram of Kelwa. Nonetheless, Skelton's theory should not be discounted, as there are cases of artists migrating from Delhi to Rajasthan and from Rajasthan to Awadh. One case in

[59] The Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, RP-T-1993-173

[60] Topsfield states that according to the late Kumar Sangram Singh of Nawalgarh, Ganga Ram was asscoiated with the thikana of Kelwa in western Mewar.

point is the family of the artist Bhawani Das who relocated from Delhi to Kishangarh. Bhawani Das' son, Rai Dalchand, ultimately settled in Jodhpur where he worked for Maharaja Abhai Singh (Crill 2000, 66-72).

The lack of concrete evidence to connect Mihr Chand to either of these artists makes it difficult to authenticate the artist's origins. Nonetheless, an outline of Mihr Chand's flourishing career can be compiled through reviewing the major shifts in his artistic style, as well as tracing the movements of his confirmed patrons and locations where artists were fortunate to receive the attention of benefactors in the Mughal provinces. From the information available, it can be suggested that Mihr Chand was born approximately during the 1730s or 1740s and received training from his father or another senior artist during his formative years. By the late 1750s, Mihr Chand was established and recognised as a leading Mughal artist. His career can be mapped into four distinct phases.

Relocating from Delhi to Allahabad by 1759, Mihr Chand embarked on a new phase in his career during which he sought patronage from the Mughal heir, Prince Ali Gauhar. Ali Gauhar, who would later succeed under the name of Shah Alam II, escaped from Delhi to the Mughal provinces with the intention of strategising with his provincial supporters the Mughal fight against the Marathas and to reclaim Delhi. Allahabad, in this interim period, would become the epicentre of Mughal political activity and the place where Prince Ali Gauhar would hold ceremonies to mark his succession as emperor in December 1759. The burgeoning social and political scene in Allahabad, with the festivities commemorating the Emperor's succession as well as the durbars held to promote political ties, would have been the ideal opportunity for artists seeking new commissions. Mihr Chand, motivated by the succession, produced two identical portraits of Shah Alam II. These formal compositions are reflective of his early style and place the artist in Allahabad during the period from 1759 to 1765 (figure 80).

With the emperor constantly on the move, seeking to strengthen his alliances with the provincial governors, it would be difficult to substantiate whether artists were included in his entourage and accompanied the emperor to places such as Varnasi and Patna. In this period, from 1759-65, Mihr Chand's paintings reflected a softened style, rather than the highly formal compositions, and he adopted a more naturalistic approach. It is almost certain that Mihr Chand's exposure to the artist Dip Chand, who was known for his unique approach to landscape, brought about this change in style. Dip Chand, who was not directly related to Mihr Chand, flourished in Patna and it is possible that he too followed the political storm to either Varanasi or Allahabad where

the provincial rulers and the emperor convened in 1763-64. This would have been the opportune moment for Dip Chand and Mihr Chand to meet and exchange ideas (Losty 2002, 45). A discussion of the counter-influence of these two artists will be discussed in the following section.

By 1765, Shuja ud-Daula of Awadh, who suffered humiliation at the hands of the British, was forced to retreat to Faizabad where he could re-build his armies. It comes as no surprise that Mihr Chand, as well as numerous artists and craftsmen, opted to follow Shuja ud-Daula to Faizabad in the hope to obtain patronage. According to Sharar (1989, 31), 'as soon as it was known that Shuja ud-Daula had decided upon Faizabad for his headquarters, crowds flocked in that direction, and thousands came and settled there. In no time persons of every race and creed, literary men, soldiers, merchants, craftsmen, individuals of every rank and class had gathered there.' In true Mughal style, Shuja ud-Daula used the opportunity of a new capital to express his leadership though the lavish court and his financial investiture of new architectural delights.

Arriving in Faizabad, Mihr Chand began the next phase of his career, which lasted from approximately 1763 to 1773. Settling in Faizabad, the artist encountered several of his contemporaries who had relocated to the region from Delhi, including Nevasi Lal and Mohan Singh, who were employed by the French officer Jean Baptiste Gentil, who had recently established his personal atelier. Lal and Singh were commissioned to produce portraits of the Nawab as well as compose illustrations to accompany several historical accounts authored by Gentil. Gentil commissioned Lal and Singh to produce portraits of the Nawab and, although the French scholar Francis Richard (1996, 40) believes that Mihr Chand was part of Gentil's atelier, there is no evidence that Gentil also hired Mihr Chand. However, after examining both Gentil and Polier's collection of paintings, there is evidence that Mihr Chand spent a significant period of time reviewing the Mughal and Deccani paintings belonging to Gentil and produced duplicate copies. Although Mihr Chand was not officially part of Gentil's establishment, he did somehow obtain access Gentil's collection of paintings. Mihr Chand's reproductions must have been completed before Gentil left Awadh for south India in the winter of 1774.

By 1773, Mihr Chand was introduced to the Swiss native Antoine Polier and began to work almost exclusively for his new patron for the remainder of his career. Mihr Chand's connection to Polier is substantiated through Polier's own letters. The *Ijaz-i Arsalani*, the collection of Persian letters by Antoine Polier, included

correspondence sent to his wives and sons, household staff, Shuja-ud-Daula, residents of Lucknow and Faizabad, several officers of the Awadhi court, as well as to Mihr Chand. The names of several artisans were also addressed including Mir Muhammad Azim (a binder), Muhammad Salah Khan (a seal engraver), and of course Mihr Chand. These letters offer insight into Mihr Chand's personality, his responsibilities, confirm his whereabouts, as well as authenticate details regarding several of his paintings. The earliest correspondence between Polier (2001, fol. 37b, 109b, and 13a) and Mihr Chand is dated 11 Shawwal 1187 AH (26 December 1773). In these letters, Polier addressed Mihr Chand as either 'a painter in Faizabad', 'the painter of the sarkar' or 'Mehrchand the painter'.[61] From this information we learn that Mihr Chand was still in Faizabad and was affiliated to the Nawab's court or administration in the early 1770s.

This resourceful group of primary documentation offers a great deal of insight into Mihr Chand's role as a member of Polier's household. Within a short span of these six years, the artist became a close confident and trusted friend. Aside from his position as an artist, Polier relied on Mihr Chand to care and protect his growing collection of manuscripts, calligraphies and paintings (Polier 2001, fol. 257 and fol. 397b). Over the course of the letters, Polier (2001, fol. 399b) would often ask the artist to keep a watchful eye over the servants, particularly Polier's *gumashta* (steward) Ram Sundar Datt. This fortuitous alliance provided Mihr Chand with benefits such as housing and a generous monthly salary of '60 rupees a month plus Fridays off' (Baryliski 1993).

As little is known about the salaries of eighteenth century artists, it is possible to compare Mihr Chand's situation only with the Umarani painters at the court of Bikaner. From an official register or *bahi* dated 1743, it is known that this select group of artists had 'enjoyed a high social status and a comfortable standard of living... as a permanent source of income, several lucrative land grants and other favours were conferred on them... [they also] received from the royal treasury Rs 6 per month and from the provisions store one *seer* (nearly 1 kg) of wheat flour and three measures of *ghee*' (Topsfield 2000, 60). Furthermore, the Umarani artists would present their works as *nazar*, official gifts from the artist to the ruler. The situation at the Bikaner court does not reflect the case for artists in Awadh who obtained patronage from foreign patrons. For Mihr Chand, while Polier provided basic benefits including housing, he received a generous salary, as previously mentioned, of 60 rupees a month. Considering that a house-steward or 'consummah', cook and other servants in Calcutta at this time

[61] Alam and Alavi (Polier 2001) spell the artist's name as 'Mehrchand'. In this thesis the artist's name follows the convention of 'Mihr Chand.'

received between 3 to 30 rupees per month, it seems as though Mihr Chand was receiving a pretty good deal (Losty 1990, 42). Unfortunately for Mihr Chand the incompetence of Polier's agent Manik Ram irritated him as the agent was often late in paying the his salary (Polier 2001, fol. 114a and 15a).

Polier commissioned the artist to work on a variety of projects including a series of portrait studies of Nawab Shuja ud-Daula (after Tilly Kettle), a study of Polier watching a dance, as well as editing and finishing numerous paintings purchased by Polier during his excursions outside Faizabad. Polier's letters document that he sent Mihr Chand at least 164 sketches, drafts of paintings, as well as 'unfinished paintings'.[62] Sending these works to the artist on 14 Safar 1189 AH (16 April 1775), he requested that Mihr Chand sort through the works by quality and size, colour in the sketches or 'complete' the higher quality works, have them bound into three albums (of varying sizes), and ask a decorator to illuminate the margins. Polier's letters (2001, fol. 256b) also indicated that Mihr Chand was assisted by the painter Duli Chand, an unnamed decorator who designed the motifs and borders of each composition, an unnamed binder to assemble albums of paintings and calligraphy, as well as an unnamed conservator to repair damaged specimens of calligraphy. By 1786, Mihr Chand and his workshop had assembled at least twelve albums for Polier; most of these albums included a frontispiece with an illuminated *shamsa* (sunburst medallion) inscribed in Persian with details of Polier's ownership and date of assembly.[63] Inside one particular volume, it was inscribed in Persian:

> Album of thirty folios (leaves) with specimens (fragments) of nasta'liq, etc., by excellent penmen of the (present) day (time, era). It was completed (was received into arrangement) for his Honour of bountiful nature (qualities) the Nawab of high station (exalted position), the Pre-eminent of the Kingdom, the Glory of the State, the valiant Major Polier, Lion in Battle, May his Good Fortune Endure!, on the second of the sacred month of Muharram (in the) year 1190 of the Hijra.[64]

In his letters, Polier would ask Mihr Chand to visit him in places including Etwah and Akbarabad, so that he could review the preliminary drafts of paintings. Until

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[62] Although Polier refers to some paintings as 'unfinished' it is likely that he was referring to *nim-qalam* drawings.

[63] See Appedix IV for a list of albums commissioned by Antoine Polier.

[64] The frontispiece of album I 4596, Museum für Islamische Kunst, was kindly translated by R. Skelton and Manjijeh Bayani (March 2007). It is inscribed in Persian, '*muraqqa'-e si warq be-khat-e naskhta'liq wa ghaireh az khwush nevisan-e ruzgar babat-e sarkar faiz asar nawwab wala jenab iftikhar al-mulk Imtiyaz al-daula maijar polier bahadur arslan jang dam iqbalahu be-tarikh-e doyum-e muharram al-haram sanah1190 hijri tartib paziraft.*'

1776, none of Polier's requests saw fruition. By 1775, Polier found it difficult to remain in the region as the British were investigating his political indiscretions. The British had been displeased with Polier's close association to Shuja ud-Daula and in particular with his involvement in assisting Nawab's campaign at the Siege of Agra in 1774. Fortunately for Polier, Shah Alam II offered him a new post which required him to relocate to Delhi. Although Polier moved to Delhi, the majority of his household, including his two Indian wives and young children, remained in Faizabad. While Polier chose to separate from his household, Mihr Chand and his assistants were asked to join him in Delhi. The promise of comfortable accommodations, secure income, as well as Polier's continual support of his work was enough for Mihr Chand to leave Faizabad by May 1776 (Polier 2001, fol. 373b and 426b). Packing up Polier's collection of albums, calligraphy and loose paintings in boxes on a cart, the artist and his entourage followed Polier's prescribed route to Delhi via Farrukhabad and Khalilganj (Polier 2001, fol. 373b). In taking this route, Mihr Chand would have passed the monumental Mughal landmarks in Agra and Fatehpur Sikri as well as had the opportunity to revisit the fortifications in Delhi.

Although the translated letters cover the period 1773-1779, the final letter to Mihr Chand in this series is dated 6 Jumada I 1190 AH (3 July 1776) and documents his arrival in Delhi and notes that he met with Polier to deliver the items he was asked to bring including 'boxes of velvet, books and paintings, a bundle of clothes... thirteen shawls, five pieces of musk, and two man rice for daily use' (Polier 2001, fol. 430a). Unfortunately, Mihr Chand's trail ends here and, according to Muzaffar Alam who translated the first part of the Polier letters, the second part of the letters focuses on Polier's involvement in military strategies in Delhi and that there were no further letters written directly to Mihr Chand.[65]

In 1780, Polier wished to return to Awadh in order to visit his family and retrieve his personal belongings. According to historical accounts (Phillimore 1945, 366), in May 1780, under the influence of Eyre Coote, he was permitted to return to Oudh and restore his former post as Engineer and Architect, but the appointment was annulled, March 1782. He was re-admitted to the Company's service with the rank of Bt. Lt. Colonel, but not to serve in any corps, and received permission to settle at Lucknow (Phillimore 1945, 366). By this time, foreigners had long since departed from Faizabad and settled in Lucknow. As Mihr Chand followed Polier to Delhi in 1776, it is

[65] Personal conversation with Muzaffar Alam in 2003.

very likely that he would accompany Polier back to Awadh and continue to manage Polier's atelier.

With the relocation of the Nawabi court from Faizabad to Lucknow, Asaf ud-Daula immediately invested his resources to urbanise the city and vastly improve the skyline. Local residents of Faizabad and the British officers in the region would all shift to the new capital. Following in the footsteps of Tilly Kettle, other European artists would come to Awadh and visit the court of Asaf ud-Daula. In the years following Polier's return to the region, he would invite several of these artists including Johann Zoffany and Ozias Humphrey into his home. It is not surprising that these artists would also have influence on Mihr Chand's style. Although it is unclear if Zoffany acquired any Awadhi paintings, Ozias Humphry received a set of illustrations as a gift from Polier. This set included works including 'A view of the Red Fort, palace and gardens', 'Women in the zenana entertained by female musicians', and 'Tightrope-walking acrobats'.[66] Polier also presented an album of paintings, that included views of the Taj Mahal and the Jami Masjid, to the wife of Sir Eyre Coote in 1786, perhaps in acknowledgement of Coote's stance and support of Polier during a trying period.[67] Inside, Polier inscribed: 'For Lady Coote from Hermostobdet. HbleSert./A.P.'

By 1786, Polier decided to settle his affairs and permanently return to France. For Mihr Chand, he had the option to solicit the patronage of one of Polier's associates, such as Claude Martin, after Polier's departure. Through these associates, he would have found ways to financially support himself. Or perhaps Polier left the artist enough funds to retire. Unfortunately, Mihr Chand's trail ends here and his final years are a mystery. In all likelihood the artist may have simply retired or even passed away.

3. Chronology of style

Mihr Chand's biography provides an account of the artist's movements across northern India, the characters he encountered, as well as the major sources of patronage he received. From this account, it becomes relatively clear that location and patronage played an integral part in defining each precise phase of style in his career. The Appendices (at the end of the thesis) provides an accurate list of paintings that are signed (28 works), attributed (22 works) or completed by the artist (5 works). This list

[66] BM 1974-6-17-05 folio a-c. Illustrations of these works are not provided.

[67] Lady Coote Album. Lucknow, c. 1786. Achenbach Foundation for Graphic Arts, San Francisco, CA (Accession No. 1982.2.70.1-20). See Appendix IV for full list of albums belonging to Polier.

of paintings clearly reflected the artist's preference for portraiture, as 55% of his total and known works were portrait studies. The other genres Mihr Chand focused on included religious scenes or narratives picturing Hindu gods, fakirs, or sheiks and their followers (18%), architectural subjects including Mughal landmarks (16%), historical narratives (4%), and natural history (4%). Regarding the works signed and attributed to Mihr Chand, it is important to note that 84% of these can be traced to albums commissioned directly by Antoine Polier. It is also worthwhile mentioning that seven paintings by Mihr Chand (or 14% of his works) were created as copies or duplicates of original paintings belonging to Jean Baptiste Gentil. The following sections will assess Mihr Chand's works in general in terms of chronological evolution. Afterwards, the next four chapters will look specifically at his approach to landscape, portrait studies, topographical drawings as well as his tendency to copy early masterpieces. Overall, these paintings will clearly demonstrate Mihr Chand's dissatisfaction with the contemporary Mughal approach and his exceptional ability to re-evaluate and recreate compositions. As a result, his innovative approach would distinguish his paintings as contemporary works rather than imitations of early paintings. Nonetheless, Mihr Chand's oeuvres overall demonstrate his astute versatility with both the traditional Mughal style as well European trends that were slowly appearing in the region.

a. Learning to cast shadows

It has proven to be difficult to locate any illustrations by Mihr Chand that pre-date 1759. As an artist trained in the Mughal style, in all likelihood his early paintings followed the general trend of imperial portraits, *ragamala* paintings, as well as generic studies of officers and courtesans - basically, anything which may have appealed to a variety of collectors and not just an imperial sponsor. Through identifying the key stylistic changes, specifically his method of casting shadows, it becomes possible to determine which paintings were produced in Delhi or Allahabad before 1765.

Taking a retrospective glance at the Mughal idiom, the convention of shadowing and chiaroscuro was derived from western sources in the seventeenth century. The Mughal artist Payag (fl. seventeenth century) was particularly fascinated with the effects of chiaroscuro and the approach to light in a night time scene; his style and approach was 'passed on to Mughal artists in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, becoming one of the clichés of late Mughal painting, particularly in the provincial artistic centres such as Lucknow' (Okada 1992, 214). During the seventeenth century,

Mughal artists were composing twilight scenes that would use a single source of light, such as a candle or a lamp, with limited awareness that the light source would cast shadows from the individuals. By the eighteenth century however, this problem had been remedied as more artists were becoming aware of incorporating shadows within their works; but for the most part, these artists followed a set pattern of projecting an angular block of translucent grey paint from behind the light source. Of Mihr Chand's contemporaries, the artist Mir Kalan Khan is noted for his adeptness in casting shadows and using light sources to draw attention to sections of paintings.

Considering *ragamala* paintings, whereby artists used similar visualisations to represent the individual *ragas* and *raginis*, we can compare Mihr Chand's depiction of 'Bhairava *Ragini'* with the work of one of his contemporaries (figure 81). Mihr Chand's version exemplifies his relative inexperience with the use of shadows. Fath Chand also created a very similar version of 'Bhairava *Ragini'* (figure 82). Both compositions picture a princess kneeling on the ground and praying at a Shiva *linga*. Four women stand behind the princess holding offerings and observe her actions. While the grouping is similar, it is Mihr Chand's stylistic nuances that change the scene. Here, the artist experimented with the use of a single light source, a candle lit at dusk, from which shadows could be cast emanating from the figures of the princess and her attendants. His attempt can be characterised as crude, as the artist used a noticeable block of translucent grey paint radiating in sharp 45-degree angles from behind the kneeling form of the princess. In reality, the light source would have cast a shadow over the lower half of the group of women. It is this approach to shadowing, which changes radically in the following years, that places this work in the early part of his career and can be dated c. 1759. When viewing Mihr Chand's version side by side with Fath Chand's version, it is clear that Fath Chand had an advanced understanding of applying shadows, as he only cast them along the edges of the women's feet.

By 1759-60, Mihr Chand's approach to shadowing and the use of light sources had radically altered from the simplistic and naïve approach witnessed in 'Bhairava Ragini'. In his two portrait studies of the new emperor Shah Alam II, the artist not only demonstrated his fluency with using shadows, but he was able to convey the austere and formal approach to painting that is associated with the style of painting in Delhi during this mid-eighteenth century period. Arriving in Allahabad by the late 1750s, Mihr Chand produced two, highly important portrait studies of Emperor Shah Alam II (figure 80 and 83). These imperial portraits reflected a sophistication that would appeal to imperial tastes. These two, almost identical, portraits were formal compositions that

depicted the emperor situated on an imperial golden throne, in strict profile, with a golden nimbus around his head to indicate his imperial status. The decision to use a neutral colour scheme, an intricately patterned carpet placed in a two-dimensional manner, the heavily burnished surface, along with the manner of illustrating the emperor in this formal manner, were all indicative of the Delhi style. The only glimpse of Mihr Chand's progressive approach was his understanding of the effects of light and his conservative approach to shadowing. Using a discernible light source which flowed diagonally across the illustration from the upper left hand corner, he was able to cast shadows in places including behind the emperor's figure, on the right side of the parasol and more visibly along the front legs of the throne. His transition and perfection of the shadowing technique was revolutionary as compared to the work of his colleagues who remained fixed on the style of shadowing, as seen in Mihr Chand's 'Bhairava *Ragini'* (figure 81). Shortly after producing these formal compositions, Mihr Chand shifted away from highly formal portrait studies, began to re-evaluate his style and introduced a more naturalistic approach.

b. Naturalism in landscape

While residing in Allahabad, from approximately 1759 to 1765, Mihr Chand embarked on the next phase of his career. This phase was marked by a divergence from his classical Mughal training and an increased awareness of naturalism. Influenced by his contemporary Dip Chand (an artist working in Patna and Murshidabad) and the French Jesuit, Father Joseph Tieffenthaler, Mihr Chand began to experiment with generating a new style of landscape that would be used in the backgrounds of his portrait studies. This new style of landscape reflected the topography of the region as well as offering an alternative to the typical backgrounds featured in early eighteenth century painting. The artist's new style and approach to landscapes would situate the sitter correctly within space and create an illusion of spatial recession in the background. The artist's reason for creating this new style of background was to replace the traditional background that consisted of an abstract landscape as indicated by a solid background colour. Mihr Chand's decision to revise his approach to landscape might also have been influenced by the changes reflected in Murshidabad painting.

Mihr Chand's new style of landscape can easily be identified as it typically followed a set pattern as seen in the detail of Figure 84. In creating his quintessential setting optimal for the background of portraits, Mihr Chand created a well-defined

horizon point, usually in the lower or middle half of the composition, at a point where mountain ranges meet the sky. Starting in the foreground, the artist delicately painted unique floral studies or individual blades of grass with variations in shades of green. Proceeding to the middle ground, the expanse was developed into a grassy plain, often using a lighter saturation of colour. Visible within the grassy plain, the artist placed individual and groups of his miniature trees. These trees, barely a few centimetres in height, were painted with perfectly rounded treetops with thin, brown trunks from which a single shadow was projected at a 45-degree angle. Completing the setting, the artist filled the upper portion of the composition with a graduation of blue hues which faded as it approached the horizon, to an almost off-white colour. The artist's final touch was to add turbulent cloud formations, typically indicated through two definitive dark-grey brush strokes on the upper corners of the work. In some cases, the artist designed uniquely swirled cloud formations, similar in style to the depictions of clouds which feature prominently in the Muhammad Shah period (McInerney 2002). Mihr Chand's greatest achievement in adjusting the landscape setting was to reintroduce the concept of aerial perspective, which had appeared in Mughal paintings during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in his paintings that 'produced a sense of depth by imitating the effects of the atmosphere whereby objects look paler and bluer the further away they are from the viewer.'[68] Chapter 4 will review in detail what sources influenced Mihr Chand's decision to incorporate this sense of naturalism into his landscapes and backgrounds.

[68] Harold Osborne, 'Aerial Perspective ', Grove Art Online <www.groveart.com>. Accessed November 2005.

c. Experimenting with the collection of Jean Baptiste Gentil

In 1765, Shuja ud-Daula's withdrawal from Allahabad had a domino effect on the inhabitants of the city, including Mihr Chand, who decided to follow the Nawab to Faizabad in the hopes that he would be able to solicit patronage from this benevolent ruler. Arriving in Faizabad, he soon realised that Shuja ud-Daula was not a forthcoming patron. In Faizabad, Mihr Chand encountered his contemporaries and would discover that foreign officers were keen to offer patronage and employ artists. Making the acquaintance of artists, including Nevasi Lal and Mohan Singh, Mihr Chand obtained access to the private art collection of Jean Baptiste Gentil. This collection included examples of Deccani and early Mughal paintings that Gentil acquired during the previous ten years in India. These paintings are of consequence as Mihr Chand would spend the subsequent years reproducing these paintings in precise detail. Many of Mihr Chand's versions would later be incorporated into the albums made for Antoine Polier. Until now, no scholar has recognised that there is a direct connection between the Gentil and Polier collections.

One particular album owned by Gentil, now in the collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale, includes a variety of paintings in the early Mughal, Rajput and Persian Safavid traditions. From this album, Mihr Chand directly copied six paintings through the aide of tracings. On the following pages, Mihr Chand's versions will be illustrated next to the original works. Mihr Chand's two illustrations, the portrait of Shayasteh Khan (figure 85) and 'Zal summoning the simurgh to help Rustam by burning a feather on a brazier' (figure 87) were identically copied (figures 86 and 88) by following the original compositional format and colour scheme. Four other works including a portrait of Maharana Jai Singh of Amber (figure 89), 'Female musician holding a *tambura*' (figure 91), 'A prince meeting Sheikh Shir Muhammad Kawwal' (figure 93) and 'A Sheikh sitting under a tree with an ascetic and musicians' (figure 95) all show minor modifications to the approach of perspective and style of landscape. Reworking these paintings, the artist replicated the original scene and replaced the background with his own interpretation of the landscape or reformatted features within the composition in order to depict figures and objects in correct perspective (figures 90, 92, 94, and 96). This ambitious project would have required the artist to work alongside the originals in order to produce a tracing of each work and to match the colour scheme precisely. Chapter 7 will be devoted to exploring why and how Mihr Chand modified these six paintings from Gentil's collection to suit his own interests. These later versions can be

dated c. 1765-73, based on the fact that Mihr Chand would have finished these paintings prior to joining Polier's household in 1773 and before Gentil departed from Awadh in the winter of 1774.

d. Patronage of Antoine Polier

Together, Polier's letter and his amassed collection of paintings confirm Mihr Chand's career flourished from 1773 to 1786. In this last known phase of his career, Mihr Chand exhibited a radical transformation in his style. Noticeably, both Tilly Kettle's portraits and Polier directly influenced Mihr Chand to assimilate both European and Mughal styles within his work.

With Polier's fast-paced lifestyle, spending days or even weeks away from Faizabad, he organised a rigorous schedule for Mihr Chand. The first project assigned to the artist was to produce a series of portrait studies of Shuja ud-Daula. Considering the fact that only a few of his contemporaries, including Mir Kalan Khan and Gobind Singh, coined portraits of the current Nawab of Awadh, Mihr Chand turned to Tilly Kettle's works for inspiration. Kettle's portraits provided Mihr Chand with ideas such as using architectural elements (columns and arches) to frame the composition and using three-quarter profile to model the sitter. Mihr Chand's portraits, nine of which can be located today, followed three different conventions: Shuja ud-Daula illustrated with his ten sons, Shuja ud-Daula pictured in his hunting attire standing outdoors, and bust-length portraits of the ruler. The influence of Tilly Kettle on Mihr Chand's approach to portraiture will be discussed at length in Chapter 5.

Through Polier's letters, the patron's attitude comes across as impatient and demanding. Mihr Chand was often chastised for his leisurely manner. On 15 *Rabi* I 1188 AH (26 May 1774), Polier (2001, fol. 114a) wrote to Mihr Chand: 'I fail to understand why you are sitting idle. Prepare some more similar portraits if you have finished the ones you were engaged with so far. This [making portraits] is your work, and it is meaningless to sit idle.' Although Polier was impatient, the work he commissioned would have kept Mihr Chand busy and motivated. Through Polier's letters we are also aware that he requested for a 'half-portrait of Didar Bakhsh'. Unfortunately, the only information available about this figure is that he or she travelled with Polier's native wife, Jawahar Bibi, from Faizabad to Calcutta in 1188 AH. It is possible that a portrait of 'Didar Bakhsh' could have been placed in an album without an inscription to identify him/her or in an album that has yet to be discovered.

Polier's letters also provides documentation of Mihr Chand's most important work, 'Colonel Polier watching a *nautch*'. This original painting merits the reader's attention as it can be suggested that his is the epitome of Mihr Chand's work (figure 1). On 9 *Jumada* I 1188 AH (18 July 1774), Polier (2001, 334a) wrote to Mihr Chand from Calcutta in regards to this painting. His instructions were:

> I have learnt from Mr. Martin's letter that you are preparing a painting of the dance. I instruct you to suspend the work for the moment. Instead prepare a half-size portrait of Didar Bakhsh (*shanih-i nimqad Didar Bakhsh*). After you have finished this, prepare a draft (*musawada*) of the painting of the dance (*warqa-i-taswir-i raqs*). I will see the draft when I come back and then you can finalise it as per my instructions.

Polier's remark suggests that he wished to exercise complete artistic control over Mihr Chand's paintings. The fact that Mihr Chand needed Polier's permission before he could complete the final version of this work is extremely important as it implies that the artist's compositional format may have been adjusted per Polier's comments. While it would be of substantial scholarly interest to compare Mihr Chand's draft(s) with the final work, the preliminary draft has not been found. It is very likely that Mihr Chand either used the same folio for the sketch and final composition, or that the sketch is on the reverse of the painting.[69]

Mihr Chand's portrait is an astute observation on the lifestyle adopted by Polier in Faizabad. In this scene, Polier relaxes on a terrace and enjoys a dance performance. The Swiss native's clothing, of traditional Awadhi garments of a white floor-length *jama* and a sash embroidered with red flowers bound around his waist, indicates his acceptance of the local culture. In addition to the garment, he wears an Awadhi style turban with a decorative crescent band, similar to those worn by Shuja ud-Daula and his sons. Although dressed in traditional clothing, Polier's feet are incongruously covered in white socks. While Polier perhaps desired to be pictured as an individual who had smoothly assimilated into the local environment, the context offered by Mihr Chand presents a different story. The artist, instead of picturing the European officer seated on a carpet supported by bolsters, opted to illustrate Polier sitting stiffly on a Sheraton settee with bolsters. This juxtaposition of the European style furniture, upholstered in a yellow printed fabric from Farrukhabad, truly reflected Polier's position as an officer of the East India Company desiring to blend into the local community but not quite being

[69] As this portrait is in the collection of the Sadruddin Aga Khan, it has not been possible to view the original work.

able to completely let go of his western identity. As Mihr Chand needed his patron's approval to finish this portrait, it can be suggested that Polier chose to be pictured in this incongruous manner.

Polier was not the only officer to commission his own portrait. The British surgeon William Fullarton commissioned his portrait from Mihr Chand's contemporary Dip Chand. It is of interest to note that the artist depicted Fullarton in his regimental uniform and not native clothing, though seated cross-legged on a carpet with his back supported by a bolster (figure 97).

Mihr Chand's portrait of Polier is extremely important, as it is one of the rare works that demonstrates his maturity as an artist as well as his original style.[70] Here, he followed the Mughal convention of the terrace portrait; [71] in the background, two attendants in similar white *jamas* stand directly behind Polier. Although Mihr Chand's focal point is the Polier and the dance performance, he did not neglect the background setting. Using the river to separate the foreground from the background, he illuminated the riverbank with golden fireworks. To be precise, Mihr Chand included a row of spectators who are mesmerised by the night sky. By this period (1774-75), Mihr Chand was extremely conscious of how to position individuals and objects in correct perspective, create the illusion of spatial recession, model figures, and the necessity of casting shadows. The artist paid attention in the placement of lamps, vases, and hookahs within the foreground; he did not with to clutter the scene. Along the balustrade and on the fence across the river, the artist illustrated alternating red and green glass tea-lights.

In the first half of the eighteenth century, Delhi artists were commonly producing similar night-time terrace scenes. Artists would often picture the activities occurring on terraces under the seduction of the night sky, such as the clandestine meeting of lovers and scenes of ladies enjoying musical performances. In fact, Polier's personal collection of miniature paintings may have provided Mihr Chand with this compositional format. 'Ladies watching dancers on a terrace' followed this same compositional format (figure 98). Using a pavilion as the backdrop, a group of ladies were seated on a carpet on the left watching dancers on the right side of the terrace. Aside from the example in Polier's collection, Muhammad Afzal also employed this model to create his own scene of dancers and musicians performing on a terrace (figure 59). Afzal's work also brings to our attention that he utilised the 'Awadhi' landscape, as

[70] The bulk of Mihr Chand's paintings, including his portraits of Shuja ud-Daula, are based on pre-exisiting models.
[71] Also used in Rajput painting.

coined by Mihr Chand, in the background of his terrace scene. Thus one ponders if these two artists collaborated in the 1770s.

In March 1775, Polier assigned Mihr Chand with an arduous task of sorting though countless paintings that Polier had purchased and 'refinishing' some of these works. In addition, Mihr Chand was to these individual paintings into albums. In his letter dated 3 March 1775, Polier sent a parcel of paintings for the attention of Mihr Chand with specific instructions. He (2001, fol. 236a and 256b) wrote to Mihr Chand:

> I am sending you sixty-eight paintings. Do as I instruct you. On twenty-three of these is embossed my signature and seal. Complete these with your own hand and keep them safely. Forty-three others have the letter *musawwir-i-duwwum* [second painter]. Get them completed by Dulichand. Keep the two on which I have written *nakara* [useless] separately. Get them ready at an earlier date. If at the moment you are doing some other paintings attend to them when you are free. Write to me which paintings you are working on and how much work the *naqqash* [decorator] has done. Keep these paintings safely and write back in detail. Twenty-three of these sixty-eight paintings with my seal to be done by Mehrchand; forty-three bearing the word *musawwir-i-duwwum* [second painter] to be done by Dulichand; two with the word *nakara* are useless. (10 *Muharram* 1189 AH).
>
> Received your letter and noted that you have received the sixty-eight paintings I had sent you earlier. I am now sending ninety-six more paintings. Forty-two of them are of the first order (*awwal*) and forty-one of the second category (*duwwum*) while thirteen are useless (*nakara*). The grading has been indicated at the back of each painting. Keep the useless ones separately and complete the remaining eighty-three paintings as follows: Call the binder (*sahhaf*) and ask him to prepare three albums for them according to their different size—big, medium, and small. In the first place an excellent artistic touch should be given to the parchment paper on the paste board (*pushta-i-wasliha*). Then note down the name of the person at the back of each portrait on a separate piece of paper, to be [finally] written on the paste-board. Take care that in the process of preparation of the paste-board the identities [of these portraits] are not lost. There is no need for separate paste-boards for those paintings which are sketched in black and white. Keep them safely and when I reach there I will fix these black and white paintings on the reverse side (*pusht*) of the other paintings. Get the paste-boards for the first and second categories of the paintings that I had sent you earlier prepared in the same manner as for these eighty-three paintings bound in three—big, medium, and small—size albums. Take maximum possible care. (14 *Safar* 1189 AH).

One would assume that Mihr Chand followed these exact directions. Though, from reviewing the albums in Berlin as well as the loose folios in public collections, there is not enough evidence that indicates that Mihr Chand repainted or 'completed' sixty-five paintings in total.

Although Polier stated that there were sixty-five paintings that required Mihr Chand's attention, only a handful of paintings that originated from Polier's collection show evidence that later adjustments were made by either Mihr Chand or a member of his studio. After close examination of the folios in Berlin, some paintings confirm that Mihr Chand (or one of his studio members) replaced the pre-existing background with the 'Awadhi' landscape. In Berlin, Mihr Chand's adjustments can immediately be seen in 'Princess and her attendant on a terrace' (figure 99), the portrait of Shah Shuja (figure 100), and two separate studies of a horse (figure 101) (figure 102). In the Chester Beatty Library, Leach has identified two works that she believes were repaired by Mihr Chand: 'Aurangzeb receives a tray of jewels' (figure 103) and 'A prince visiting an ashram' (figure 104).

In the period from 1776 to 1786, Mihr Chand's choice of genres expanded and his style of painting became more expressive. Unfortunately, we have no written documentation for this period. Polier's letters to Mihr Chand ended after the artist arrived in Delhi.[72] In Delhi, Polier moved into a house built by 'Camurodin Khan, the Wazir to Muhammad Shah' (Campbell and Samuel 1800, 29) and offered Mihr Chand suitable accommodations within his new residence and a comfortable allowance. As Mihr Chand would have been within close proximity to Polier, it meant that Polier no longer need to send his instructions and could monitor his progress on a daily basis.

In this later phase, Mihr Chand shifted his focus to topographical views and illustrations of Mughal landmarks. These studies demonstrated his experimentation with western techniques and genres. His work 'Garden scene' demonstrated his understanding of centralised perspective and the bird's-eye view (figure 105). He also drew studies of the Taj Mahal, which he may have seen in person during his journey from Faizabad to the capital, as well as the Jami Masjid and Red Fort in Delhi. These illustrations of the landmarks are extremely important; he distinguished architectural drawings as an independent genre, as well as demonstrated his skill in using the western technique of single-point perspective. Mihr Chand's innovative approach to representing landmarks in accurate perspective is the earliest successful attempt by an Indian artist.[73] As his illustrations are rather accurate, Mihr Chand must have composed them *in situ*. Though there is the distinct possibility that Mihr Chand learned this

[72] According to Alam (personal conversation in 2003), the second series of Polier's letters at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris focus on Polier's assessment of the political situation in Delhi. These have yet to be translated from Persian to English.

[73] It was only in the first quarter of the nineteenth century that artists in Murshidabad, Delhi and Agra began to work with single point perspective in their drawings of architectural landmarks.

technique from a European draughtsman either in Agra or Delhi. Unfortunately, this period of his career from 1776 to 1786 is undocumented; as a result, it is difficult to state with certainty what sources inspired his architectural drawings and this radical shift in his style.

CHAPTER 4

Understanding the concept of spatial recession and coining the Awadhi landscape

With the arrival of Europeans and British officers to the region, there was the mélange of east and west; as a result, a spectacular hybrid culture began to evolve. Local residents endeavoured to learn from these foreign visitors subjects such as western theology, military tactics, cartography, and the fine arts. For Mihr Chand, the hybridisation of Indo-Persian and European cultures began to diffuse into his artistic sensibility and was visualised in his work. Although early Mughal artists were challenged by concepts presented in European engravings, Mihr Chand's ability to apply aerial and linear perspective correctly, as well as imply spatial recession, steers our attention to his extraordinary work. This chapter focuses on Mihr Chand's stylistic progression; we will review how the artist experimented with the early Mughal approach to spatial recession, the current trends in Awadhi painting, and how the artist ultimately coined the 'Awadhi' landscape, which would be imitated by his followers.

1. Interpreting the early Mughal approach to spatial conventions

The representation of space within Indian painting varies between idioms. Viewing pre-Mughal Hindu paintings, as in the case of early Rajput *Bhagavata Purana* scenes from a dispersed mid-sixteenth century manuscript, it is possible to recognise how artists used the convention of registers in order to present narrative action across a folio (Topsfield 2007, 32-34). Within a short span of fifty years, Mughal artists would adopt the conventions found in Safavid painting, rather than follow the pre-Mughal Hindu style, in order to convey narrative in a more realistic approach. Instead of using registers, artists divided the picture plane into several horizontal sections, thereby effectively establishing a foreground, middleground, and background. The artist also achieved the illusion of spatial recession by using a bird's eye viewpoint that would 'suggest depth and space without any of the European tricks of perspective' (Losty, in press). This bird's eye perspective utilised a high-level vantage point, giving the impression of looking down below on the scene, allowing the foreground not to obscure the background.[74] This contrived approach to perspective would allow the artist to

[74] Ralph Hyde, 'Bird's Eye View', *Grove Art Online*, <http://www.groveart.com/>. Accessed on 23 July 2006.

change the way narrative or an event was depicted, as in the case of scenes from the *Akbarnama* in which the narrative travels from the foreground up the page into the upper background.

In the early phase of Mughal painting, another, yet interrelated, idea arose. Through the development of the picture plane and including a specified foreground and background, there was the opportunity for artists to experiment with the idea of topographical views as a realistic backdrop for illustrations. Koch (1997, 138) identifies these view as 'wide vistas with continuous transition from the foreground into depth' that were 'Indianized adaptations and transformations of acclaimed Flemish world landscapes'. Koch (1997, 138) elaborates that during the Jahangir period, the idea of landscape would be marginalised and become 'confined to the far distance'. With this in mind, one questions what was the function of illustrating topographical views or a naturalistic landscape within Mughal paintings? In the early period, artists utilised landscapes to create a naturalistic surrounding or backdrop to a painting. Kesu Das was one of the few artists that pictured distant topographical views in the backgrounds of his portraits as well as narrative scenes. Nonetheless, artists in the seventeenth century were also encouraged to consider topographical studies and views of the landscape as an independent genre. As a result, several large format depictions of forests and landscape vistas were produced, including the following scene that was directly based on an engraving by either the Flemish painter Isaac Gillis van Coninxloo or the Dutch painter Jacod Savery (figure 106).

In drawing inspiration, Mughal artists looked towards both Persian and European models. From Safavid painting, artists would appropriate and assimilate features such as the unnaturally formed rocky outcrops to designate hills or mountains. From European engravings, artists would become exposed to concepts of aerial perspective. This concept in particular is extremely relevant in our discussion of Mihr Chand. By using a defined and visible horizon point, seventeenth century artists would illustrate distant landscapes 'with colour toning and *sfumato* to create genuine recession into the far distance' (Losty, in press). It is this approach, popularised in seventeenth century Mughal painting, which would be imitated by Mihr Chand almost 150 years later.

In the 1750s and 1760s, Delhi and Awadhi artists may have been aware of this seventeenth century artistic tradition. Mihr Chand, however, would have become aware of the different approaches to spatial recession through the examples of paintings in the

collection of Jean Baptiste Gentil in Faizabad. From 1765 to 1773, Mihr Chand closely studied the paintings acquired by Gentil. One of the paintings he encountered was a damaged folio from a dispersed *Shahnameh* manuscript (the Persian 'Book of Kings') that had been identified by the Frenchman as '*Simourgh ou phénix indien fables*' (figure 88). According to Gentil's records, this particular painting was one of the '*dessins Indien non valable*' (meaning that these Indian illustrations were not valuable).[75] This damaged painting would have offered Mihr Chand an insight into the concept of spatial recession in the early Mughal period. Meticulously copying the damaged original, Mihr Chand produced his copy of 'Zal summoning the simurgh to help Rustam by burning a feather on a brazier' (figure 87). In this highly complex and visually stimulating scene, the figure of Zal with a white beard stands in a higher point of the composition, a grassy valley in the midst of the mountains, and summons the simurgh. Through this overwhelming composition, Mihr Chand's became aware of the Persian and early Mughal usage of the bird's eye technique and the placement of the figures at different levels. Copying exactly each curve of the rocky formations, the trees protruding from the outcrop, the detailing of the clothing and the depiction of the horse, he did not make any visible changes to the compositional format.

Mihr Chand's dexterity and ability to work in a range of styles is not limited to the scene from the *Shahnameh.* Amongst the paintings signed by the artist is an unidentified scene believed to be a copy of folio from an Akbar period manuscript that pictures a nobleman awaiting the arrival of a king (figure 107). Unfortunately, the original work cannot be traced. Of no surprise, Mihr Chand's cunning ability to recreate this composition misled Ernst Kühnel (1922) and S.P. Verma (1994). Kühnel (1922, 118) estimated that this work was a seventeenth century copy of a Humayun period painting. Verma (1994, 273) suggested that Mihr Chand's work was in fact a 'folio from an unidentified manuscript of Akbar's court.' Both Kühnel and Verma incorrectly assumed that Mihr Chand's work was an early seventeenth century example.

In the illustration of a 'Noble on an elephant and accompanied by attendants meets a person on book', the artist utilised a bird's eye viewpoint and Persian style rocky landscape as the backdrop. Although the original painting cannot be located, it is suggested that Mihr Chand made a precise copy of the original. By using the bird's eye overview, the viewer could witness the animated encounter between the nobleman and the exclaiming person on foot, the group of onlookers in the foreground, as well as the

[75] BnF, Department des Estampes et Photographie, Réserve, Ye. 62.

group of attendants arriving on horseback carrying the nobleman's weapons (covered in vermillion fabric) from beyond the hill in the background. Although Mihr Chand seemed interested in practising the Persian approach to perspective, his choice of a vivid colour scheme clearly demonstrates that this was not an early seventeenth century painting as Kühnel (1922, 118) and Verma (1994, 273) originally believed. Therefore, it can be suggested that Mihr Chand's awareness of the early model should be accepted as the artist following and familiarising himself with the pre-established conventions of his predecessors. The question of copying the original work from Gentil's collection will be addressed in the final chapter.

2. Reflecting on current trends

In the post-Shah Jahani tradition of painting, Mughal artists did not exhibit an awareness of spatial recession until the first quarter of the eighteenth century. It was during Muhammad Shah's period, that artists began to grasp on how to create the illusion of depth and the recession of space within their compositions. His atelier was instrumental in transforming Mughal painting; instead of static portraits of rulers set within a *jharoka* frame, artists were inspired to portray his personality by depict his passion for both hunting and women. Comparing two miniature paintings, one by Bhawani Das (figure 37) from the Bahadur Shah period (r. 1707-12) with a work attributed to Chitarman (figure 43) of the Muhammad Shah period, we are presented with two drastically different approaches to portraiture. Instead of static imagery and the highly formalised compositional format, Muhammad Shah's artists were delivering naturalistic and lavish scenes. Of relevance, one can clearly see the shift in compositional style from the compacted scene in which figures are compressed to fit within the picture plane, and the openness of composition that allows each figure and object their own position in the scene. Artists such as Chitarman achieved openness by developing the foreground and widening the depth or the distance between the foreground and the background. Even within this background plane, the artist was resourceful and augmented the use of this space to create yet another receding garden.

The impact of Muhammad Shah's atelier was short-lived. From the end of his reign through the end of the century, there was a steady decline in the quality of Mughal painting. As a few of Mihr Chand's own works reflect this decline, it could be suggested that the ideas introduced during Muhammad Shah's reign were in fact nullified by the mid-eighteenth century.

Mihr Chand's portrait of Shah Alam II (figure 80) echoed the highly formalised style favoured by Bhawani Das almost fifty years prior. On the occasion of Shah Alam's succession in 1759, Mihr Chand produced an elegant and conventional portrait that depicted the emperor in rigid profile and kneeling on his throne. Although it could be suggested that the artist was conscious of following tradition and could only portray the emperor in this formal manner, I believe that his early approach to painting consistently reflected a constrained formalism and it was not dependent on the subject matter. Even in a *ragamala* illustration of 'Bhairava *Ragini'*, which is meant to be a lyrical visualisation of the musical mode, Mihr Chand could not overcome his conservative approach (figure 81). His interpretation adhered to the pre-established compositional format in which a young woman believed to be 'Parvati worships Shiva at a shrine on mount Kailash in the Himalayas' (Stooke and Khandalavala 1953, 46). In his version, he pictured a princess (as indicated by the halo encircling her head) kneeling in front of a Shiva linga with her attendants gathered behind her on a terrace. Using a balustrade as a marker, the artists drew in a horizontal band of trees and foliage that blocked the viewer from obtaining a greater view beyond the main shrine area and terrace. As a result, the narrative was restricted to the foreground and the artist did not take the opportunity to augment the background scene. As compared to the Muhammad Shah style of painting, Mihr Chand reduced the openness in composition by foreshortening the distance between the foreground and background.

The technique used in both his portrait of Shah Alam II and 'Bhairava *Ragini'*, of restricting the viewer's gaze by the convention of a balustrade, appears in his next work, 'A prince celebrating the festival of *Holi* with the women of the harem' (figure 108). In this scene, a prince and his companion stand in the centre of the terrace with women playing with colours and women performing music standing on either end of the terrace. Similar to the previous work, Mihr Chand preferred to create a solid, two-dimensional wall composed of alternating cypress trees and mango trees with a single cherry blossom tree on either end. Although there is a sense of spatial recession in the foreground in these two compositions, it is limited to the far end of the terrace. Mihr Chand phased out this constricting format by the mid-1760s.

Mihr Chand's usage of the contemporary pictorial format, consisting of the undeveloped background space, ran its course by the mid-1760s. By approximately 1763-64 there was a turning point in his approach to defining space within paintings. Experimenting with techniques such as linear and aerial perspective, he would develop a greater sense of three-dimensionality within his paintings which he achieved by coining a new approach to landscape in the backgrounds of his paintings. In fact, his stylistic approach would invoke memories of the seventeenth century Mughal landscapes that referred to Flemish and Dutch engravings. Several of Mihr Chand's paintings produced in Faizabad demonstrated the development of this new style.

Prior to documenting the change in Mihr Chand's approach to landscape, we must first identify this new style of landscape that he inserted into the backgrounds of his paintings. In the previous chapter, a brief description was provided. Referring back to Chapter 3, it can be said that the artist's new style can be defined as having:

> ...a well-defined horizon point, usually in the lower or middle half of the composition, at a point where mountain ranges meet the sky. Starting in the foreground, the artist delicately painted unique floral studies or individual blades of grass with variations in shades of green. Proceeding to the middle ground, the expanse was developed into a grassy plain, often using a lighter saturation of colour. Visible within the grassy plain, the artist place individual and groups of his miniature trees. These trees, barely a few centimetres in height, were painted with perfectly rounded treetops with thin, brown trunks from which a single shadow was projected at a 45-degree angle. Completing the setting, the artist used the technique of aerial perspective with a gradation of blue hues that faded as it approached the horizon, to an almost off-white colour. Mihr Chand's final touch was to add turbulent cloud formations, typically indicated through two definitive dark-grey brush strokes on the opposing upper corners of the work. In some cases, Mihr Chand designed uniquely swirled cloud formations, similar in concept to the cloud formations of the Muhammad Shah period. Mihr Chand's greatest achievement in adjusting the landscape setting was to introduce the Roman concept of aerial perspective in his paintings that 'produced a sense of depth by imitating the effects of the atmosphere whereby objects look paler and bluer the further away they are from the viewer'.

This detailed description accurately describes Mihr Chand's general approach to delineating landscape. To create a highly sophisticated background, the artist began to incorporate small objects strategically placed in the background setting in order to suggest the extreme distance. His most common choices included mosques, temples or other buildings painted in a bright white colour, drawn in correct perspective and with their shadows cast in the appropriate direction. In some cases, the artist would elaborate

by illustrating agrarian scenes in the distance with farmers tilling the land accompanied by horses and cattle.

From the description of Mihr Chand's approach to landscape in particular, the question arises as to what extent was his style based on European techniques, and what was the source which inspired his divergence from the contemporary approach using static backgrounds? The technical concepts of spatial recession achieved through aerial perspective was introduced to Mughal artists in the sixteenth century through examples of prints and engravings brought to the Mughal court by Dutch and Jesuit visitors to the subcontinent. Although the majority of the images represented Christian iconography and biblical scenes, these illustrations offered Mughal artists insights on new methods to approach landscape, portraiture, and solving the problems of recession and creating space.

Koch's (2000, 29-37) article on 'Netherlandish naturalism in imperial Mughal painting' brings to light early examples which show evidence of Flemish and Dutch influence. In particular, Koch raises the idea of how Mughal artists became aware of the technique of aerial perspective and how it gave rise to a distinctive background space. Koch (2000, 32-33) also highlights the work of Kesu Das (fl. c. 1580-90), a leading artist of the Mughal atelier, who transported Dutch and Flemish landscape elements into his Mughal frame, although 'the individual components were often replaced by Indian or Persianising elements' which allowed for the assimilation of European ideas within the Mughal dialogue. While the reference to European landscapes was in vogue primarily in the early seventeenth century, they were replayed during the Shah Jahan period and adapted into the backgrounds of battle scenes and processions from the Windsor *Padshahnama* (figure 109). Nonetheless, the reference and usage of the European techniques would disappear in the later seventeenth century. Moving forward to the eighteenth century, one questions why there was a revival of European landscape forms and what was the source material?

In the second half of the eighteenth century, artists in Awadh and Bengal began to show an awareness of European techniques in their works. In the 1750s, Murshidabad and Patna artists were re-introducing aerial perspective in their landscape studies as seen in the following illustration of a 'River landscape' (figure 110). Even the Delhi artist Mir Kalan Khan, who appeared in Awadh during the 1760s, was fascinated with the Flemish and Dutch style landscapes as demonstrated in his work, 'Village life in Kashmir' (figure 63). While it is difficult to state with certainty what the impetus was

for artists such as Mir Kalan Khan to consider and replicate western landscapes, it could be suggested that European examples were brought to the region by European merchants and East India Company officers and circulated amongst both European and Nawabi societies. In the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum, the small and large Clive albums, which are mid-eighteenth century compilations, contain numerous engravings on pastoral subjects.

Reviewing Mihr Chand's illustration of landscape in his paintings produced before 1775, there is no evidence that he was influenced by imagery from European engravings.[76] In the early 1760s, Mihr Chand's shift in style commenced. Losty (2002, 41-45) suggests that the artist's new approach to landscape was directly a result of his encounter with the Murshidabad artist Dip Chand. These two artists must have met in either Allahabad or at Varanasi during the meetings between the provincial rulers of Awadh and Bengal with Shah Alam II around 1763-64.

Deconstructing this connection is crucial, as Dip Chand's paintings that are firmly dated 1763-64 show striking similarities with the landscape style that Mihr Chand developed. Not only did Dip Chand exhibit his proficiency with both linear and aerial perspective, he inserted miniaturised trees and small scale objects in the background to create the illusion of recession. As both established almost identical landscape styles in approximately the same time frame, without doubt these two artists must have exchanged ideas or perhaps Mihr Chand discovered Dip Chand's work in Allahabad.

Dip Chand's portrait studies demonstrate his formulaic approach to achieve spatial recession. His portraits of Mir Qasim Ali Khan (Nawab of Bengal r. 1760-63) (figure 111), Alivardi Khan (Nawab of Bengal r. 1740-56) (figure 112), and Shah Alam II (figure 113) followed the same pattern. He illustrated a white marble terrace in the foreground, a horizontal stretch of river, followed by green fields and elaborate skies decorated with golden clouds. Each section was presented as a horizontal band, each drawn parallel to the terrace. In the distant field, the artist inserted miniature trees that were well rounded with visible trunks. Trees were staggered, arranged in rows, or even placed individually within the distance. The major difference from Mihr Chand's approach was that Dip Chand opted to draw the fields slightly concave to the band of water and did not cast shadows, including shadows that radiated from the trees.

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[76] Whilst there is no evidence that Mihr Chand based his drawings of background landscape on European engravings, the artist does appropriate from engravings to produce his portraits of 'Venus'; this will be discussed in the following chapter.

Although Dip Chand favoured this formulaic approach, his portrait of Ashraf Ali Khan (figure 114) and a work entitled 'A lady called Muttuby' each diverged from the earlier approach. In these two paintings, he used strict parallel bands to present the riverbank (where the sitter is positioned), the river, as well as the distant landscape. He also shifted the horizon to a higher position on the folio. Though, it is the artist's choice of a diluted water-based medium, which created the illusion of *sfumato* and the tonal effects of aerial perspective. In addition, Dip Chand's depiction of the trees in the background was different; to enhance the illusion of *sfumato,* he placed the trees immediately next to one another in an exact row, so that their outlines were blurred. Dip Chand's approach to landscape was imitated by contemporary and later Murshidabad artists. In the following years, local artists would continue create distinctive bands of rivers, landscape, and skies as well as incorporate rows of trees along the horizon to complete their illustrations (figure 115).

By the 1780s, both Awadhi and Bengali artists had popularised the insertion of topographical views into the background of paintings, though one questions what was the motivation or source that inspired Dip Chand and Mihr Chand? Was this approach meant to insinuate a realistic presentation of space within paintings, or perhaps it was a reflection of the actual topography of the region? Considering historical accounts, the diary of William Daniell does provide some clues to the contemporary topography of the region, which Mihr Chand would have experienced on a daily basis. Recording his impressions of the region of Fategarh (in Awadh), Daniell wrote on 7 January 1789, 'Un. & self rode round the Plain on an Elephant. Delia is the most beautiful Plain we have seen in India, a number of delightful Groups of Trees cover it which were situated in such a manner as to appear to have been planted like an English park which it much resembles.'[77] At the end of the nineteenth century, even the Imperial Gazetteer (Sharma 1959, 19-21) commented that the landscape of the Awadh province was 'full of trees, groves and gardens that give it a picturesque appearance.' Perhaps it was this picturesque vista that Mihr Chand was conscious to reflect in his own work and offer a true landscape of the Allahabad and Awadh regions?

In the 1760s and 1770s, the British officer and French missionaries were actively engaged in producing maps of the region and topographical views for official purposes. Of considerable interest, many of these men would employ local artists to assist in drafting overviews and preliminary maps, thereby introducing them to a variety

[77] BL APAC, WD 4147.

of methods that were commonly used in western map making. One figure who requires our attention is Joseph Tieffenthaler. Father Joseph Tieffenthaler (1720-85) was a French Jesuit missionary who arrived in Goa in 1743 (Phillimore 1945, 11). Tieffenthaler visited cities including Udaipur, Jaipur, Narwar and Agra by 1751 and reached Allahabad and Awadh in 1766 (Phillimore 1945, 11). Developing a fondness for the local society, he remained in Faizabad until his death in 1785 (Phillimore 1945, 388). An avid astronomer and geographer, he illustrated the architectural splendour of palaces, forts and even captured the topography of the region during his travels in India (Bernoulli 1789). Tieffenthaler's method of portraying architecture and topography was not necessarily innovative; instead, he followed the conventional European methods of cartography (including symbols such as miniaturised trees to indicate forests) and eighteenth century landscape drawings produced in England by the likes of Capability Brown. Tieffenthaler, assisted by a local Indian draftsman, had produced numerous studies of the topography and the architectural landmarks located in each of the regions he visited by 1766. His collections of illustrations and travel accounts were incorporated into J. Bernoulli's (1789) *Description Historique and Geographique de l'Inde* and published after his death. Visible in his studies, particular those of 'Banghar', 'Gvaliar' [Gwalior], 'Datia' and 'Azegar', are his depiction of miniature-style trees (figure 116) that would also appear in the paintings by Mihr Chand. One questions if Mihr Chand directly observed the works produced by Tieffenthaler and his draughtsmen and how did he become aware of these studies?

Mihr Chand's connection to Jean Baptiste Gentil is the starting point to research if the artist was influenced directly by Tieffenthaler. As Mihr Chand began to experiment with this new style of landscape after his arrival in Faizabad, it is possible that he discovered examples of Tieffenthaler's work in Gentil's collection. Gentil and Tieffenthaler were well acquainted and it is very likely that Gentil would have acquired examples made by Tieffenthaler's draughtsmen in this period. Furthermore, Archer (1992, 192) suggested that Gentil hired Tieffenthaler's draughtsmen to produce architectural drawings of structures in Faizabad, Agra, and Delhi in approximately 1774. Therefore, it can be suggested that, through his association to Gentil, he would have discovered examples of topographical views and maps that used unique cartographic symbols to perfect his technique.

Polier, on the other hand, cannot be directly credited for introducing Mihr Chand to this new style of landscape, as the artist joined Polier's household by 1773, far too many years after the artist began to use the formulaic landscape in the background of his

paintings. It should be noted, however, that as Polier was involved in an official capacity as a surveyor for the British East India Company, it would have been likely that he kept drafts of maps or topographic studies in his residence. While it is difficult to pinpoint the precise sphere of influence that altered Mihr Chand's perception of landscape, his affiliation to Gentil and Polier would have provided him with examples of such works, allowing him the means to perfect his style.

Not all of Mihr Chand's paintings use this formulaic approach to landscape, though there are several key examples which demonstrate how the artist developed his style. Viewing Mihr Chand's study of a blue buck, or a 'Nilgau', one could assume that his approach to landscape in this work was one of his earliest known attempts (figure 118). The artist's rendition of the common animal resting at the edge of the riverbank is reminiscent of the Safavid and early Mughal approach in terms of perspective. Instead of using a flat horizon or flat landscape, the artist used a hilly formation within the foreground space. Furthermore, the artist combined the bird's eye perspective with aerial perspective, so that the viewer's gaze would first go upward and then beyond the hills into the distance. While Mihr Chand's attempt seems haphazard, in his later landscapes he consciously developed his approach by using a flat or level landscape.

Mihr Chand's portrait of Humayun is noteworthy. Here Mihr Chand ingeniously appropriated the sixteenth century iconography of the emperor and set it against an eighteenth century landscape (figure 118).[78] In this particular work, Mihr Chand used a low horizon point, a vivid green grassy plain dotted with small scale tall trees with ultra thin trunks, and perfect 45 degree shadows projecting from the base of these trunks. Surprisingly, Mihr Chand seemed to show some hesitancy with using aerial perspective and barely showed the tonal reflection of the sky at the horizon point.

Aside from using his contrived landscape as the backdrop for portrait studies, he was able to incorporate elements into narrative topics. Mihr Chand's painting of 'Gajendra-moksha', a scene from Hindu mythology, pictures Vishnu and Lakshmi arriving on their vehicle Garuda and rescuing the elephant king who is being attacked by a crocodile in the river (figure 119). As compared to the landscape developed for the portrait of Humayun, in this work the artist created a more elaborate setting. In this scene, he fixed the horizon across middle of the folio and illustrated rolling mountains that reflected the bluish tones of aerial perspective. Mihr Chand drew individual studies of tall trees as well as his miniaturised groups of trees. Elephants are drawn within the

[78] These paintings are not discussed in order of production.

gated enclosure, as well roaming through the landscape. In the distance there is a fortress and a small Saivite shrine on the right; two unidentified structures are drawn on the left. To complete the scene, Mihr Chand used his signature heavy brushstrokes along the upper edge of the folio to indicate dark clouds.

There are several other works by Mihr Chand that illustrate the use of a flat background landscape, sometimes with a distant view of mountain ranges along horizon. 'Vishnu and Lakshmi with Garuda' (figure 120), was a close study of the study of the hero and heroine in 'Gajendra-moksha' (figure 119).[79] By understanding this concept of the flat and even landscape presented using aerial perspective to define the distance, several unsigned works can be attributed to the artist. 'Elephant tethered to a tree' is an excellent representation of the natural history subject that was situated within a realistic landscape setting (figure 121). Two identical portraits of a Turkish *mullah* or a *mufti* also demonstrate Mihr Chand's expert hand at creating landscapes (figures 122 and 123). In these two compositions, he designated the horizon across the middle of the folio, illustrated mountains in the distance that reflected the bluish tones of the sky and on the distant grassy plain, as well as staggered groups of rounded trees with their counterpart thin trunks and shadows. In completing these two, almost identical portraits, the artist inserted the dark grey clouds along the upper edge of the folio and puffy white clouds in the distance. Looking at the approach to landscape and comparing the style to Mihr Chand's signed painting Humayun, it is unquestionable that stylistically these two studies are the work of Mihr Chand. However, the problem lies in the 'signature' or inscription in the lower left corner of Figure 123, which states that this painting is the 'work of Bahadur Singh'. Researching Bahadur Singh's style, his painting entitled 'The rite of Sati' demonstrates the use of the miniature tree (figure 124). However, there is no evidence of the lowered horizon point and use of aerial perspective as scene in the previous painting (figure 123). Therefore it could be suggested that an eighteenth century scribe incorrectly attributed this work to Bahadur Singh instead of Mihr Chand.

Antoine Polier's collection as well as his letters provides a vast resource towards understanding Mihr Chand's stylistic changes over the course of his career. Looking through the albums, particularly those in Berlin, there are several miniature paintings in which the background was repainted in the 1770s. In the background of a portrait of Farrukh Siyar, produced during his reign (r. 1712-19), it is clearly visible that the background was repainted with a new landscape (figure 41). This was not the only work

[79] Though, it is unclear if this was intentional or a preliminary study for 'Gajendra-moksha'.

that was adjusted; countless works within these albums show the evidence of an added 'Awadhi' landscape in Mihr Chand's style. In some cases, the artist or his assistant used watered-down pigments in order to brush in the surrounding backdrop.

Polier's (2001, fol. 236a) suggested to Mihr Chand that he should 'finish' a group of sixty-five paintings. Polier's request was rather ambiguous; was Polier under the impression that *nim qalam* drawings were 'unfinished' works? Perhaps Polier acquired sketches and asked Mihr Chand to use these preliminary drafts to make new compositions. The only conclusion that can be drawn, from his request and the evidence in the Polier albums, is that Mihr Chand and his assistant added newly devised landscapes to the backgrounds of miniature paintings from an earlier period. Although the extent of this trend cannot be fully explored at this time due to the lack of access to the Polier albums at the time of fieldwork, there are a few paintings that show evidence of Mihr Chand's hand. His formulaic landscape appears in 'Princess and her attendant on a terrace' (figure 99), a portrait of Shah Shuja (figure 100), and two studies of horses (figures 101 and 102). Thus, it can be accepted that this formulaic landscape and its style is clearly an identifier of Mihr Chand's hand and assists in attributing further works to the artist.

Searching for other works by Mihr Chand, outside of the Polier albums, there are two works that exhibit his skilful brushstrokes in the Chester Beatty Library. In the background of 'Aurangzeb receiving a tray of jewels', Mihr Chand's complex landscape appears (figure 103).[80] The lower half of the composition was illustrated in the late seventeenth century and consisted of a terrace setting with the Emperor seated on his throne. Leach (1995, 487) attributed the upper half of the folio, that included a distant landscape with an agrarian scene of farmers and cattle, mosque and horses, to the workshop of Mihr Chand. While Leach confidently attributed the background to Mihr Chand's workshop, the use of this landscape complete with aerial perspective, it is more likely to be the artist's own handiwork. As an unrelated point, though an important question, one wonders why Mihr Chand did not bother to add a nimbus to surround Aurangzeb's profile or make any adjustments to the lower section. As the cartouche above the picture identifies the portrait clearly as 'a picture of Emperor Muhammad Aurangzib Alamgir', he would have been aware of the sitter's identity and known that it would have been appropriate to add this symbol of sovereignty. The second painting in the Chester Beatty Library, that Leach suggests show's Mihr Chand's hand, is an early

[80] Leach attributed the background to Mihr Chand's studio.

seventeenth century work by Bishandas, of a prince visiting an ashram (figure 104). In the foreground of the painting, the surface of the painting has been retouched and it is clear that a later artist, very likely to be Mihr Chand, correctly modelled the figures and applied the correct shadowing that was cast from these figures.

Mihr Chand's contribution to Awadhi painting is rather substantial. Although his contemporaries Dip Chand as well as Mir Kalan Khan had embraced the technique of aerial perspective, it was Mihr Chand's delineation of landscape that had the most profound affect on the work of his contemporaries, more so than the work of Mir Kalan Khan. His approach in using low horizon points, aerial perspective and dotted trees in the background would create a domino effect within the Awadhi idiom.

Several miniature paintings from Polier's collection provide evidence of the domino effect. Unsigned works, including this natural history study of two birds, clearly show the lowered horizon point, with dotted trees and bushes and the attention toward delineating the sky (figure 125). Even in the background of a double portrait of Akbar and Jahangir, this style appears. However, when looking outside the Polier albums, there is a greater implication of the impact of Mihr Chand's approach to landscape. In a series of natural history drawings produced in Lucknow after 1775 for the Frenchman Claude Martin, we are presented with a very similar pictorial format of a low horizon point and the use of aerial perspective (figure 126). In effect, Martin's artists found this approach to be advantageous towards situating their drawings within a realistic backdrop which could be easily replicated.

As a result, Mihr Chand must be credited for coining the iconic Awadhi landscape that is replayed throughout the works of his followers from the late 1770s onwards. Differentiating Mihr Chand's landscapes from the work of his followers is rather straightforward. The majority of Awadhi artists using this technique favoured the medium of watercolours and not the more opaque pigments chosen by Mihr Chand. Furthermore, the generic Awadhi landscape did not include the stylised features pictured in Mihr Chand's paintings, including the small white buildings and the unique miniature trees. Rather, his followers created unrefined trees almost blurred together as a result of the choice in medium. This differentiation is extremely important, as it is Mihr Chand's highly stylised landscape format that provides scholars with a method by which to assist in identifying his works.

CHAPTER 5

Portraiture

Akbar's supervision of the Mughal atelier prompted the production of individual portrait studies; rather than generic depictions of individuals, Mughal artists were challenged to represent an individual's true physiognomy. Akbar and the Mughal atelier were readily influenced by the examples of European engravings and ephemera that were brought to the Mughal court. Prior to this period, the concept of realistic portrayals of individuals was not practised. Glancing retrospectively at the Ajanta paintings of the fifth century as well as the pre-Mughal Hindu manuscript illustrations of the fifteenth century, the artist typically rendered generic depictions of individuals who could be identified through the visual context of the narrative, passages of text that accompanied the scene, or through the unique symbols associated with mythological characters. Considering the concept of realistic portraiture, it can be said that 'the idea was developed out of a combination of Indian and Safavid Persian figurative innovations, to which the spark awakening into a true art of portraiture was given by the introduction into the Mughal court of European engraved portraits, medals and cameos' (Losty, in press). This chapter will offer a detailed account of the development of the genre under the patronage of Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan and discuss how it was their exceptional ability to grasp western techniques and ideas that allowed them to produce some of the most surprising and powerful studies of their imperial patrons. It is this ability, as well as an artist's ingenuity, that becomes exceedingly vital to understand the portraits produced by Mihr Chand during the second half of the eighteenth century. Through reviewing Mihr Chand's paintings collectively, it becomes clear that portraiture was the artist's preferred genre and encompasses at least 55 per cent of his known works. He portrayed emperors, the Nawabs of Awadh, Antoine Polier, and numerous courtesans. Trained in the Mughal idiom, Mihr Chand's portrait studies exemplify his dexterity with the traditional approach to the genre as well as his ability to adept western techniques into his studies. While the artist's portrait studies have briefly been discussed in Chapter 3, this chapter will specifically look at his approach to the genre and review the major shifts in style.

The account by Abul Faz'l (Blochmann 1927, 113) on Akbar's passion for the 'Art of Painting' is one of the most important documents in the history of Mughal art, as it provides the earliest glimpse into imperial patronage and the imperial atelier. More importantly, he also provided insight into the genre of portraiture (Blochmann 1927, 113-14):

> Drawing the likeness of anything is called *taswir*. His Majesty, from his earliest youth, has shown a great predilection for this art, and gives it every encouragement, as he looks upon it as a means, both of study and amusement. Most excellent painters are now to be found, and masterpieces, worthy of a *Bihzad*, may be placed at the side of the wonderful works of the European painters who have attained worldwide fame. The minuteness in detail, the general finish, the boldness of execution, etc., now observed in pictures, are incomparable; even inanimate objects look as if they had life.

This idea of giving life to portraits was of utmost importance. In the Akbar period, rather than portraying generic portrait studies that would be identifiable through inscriptions, artists were encouraged by the emperor to convey realistic images that would express one's character. Introducing his artists to the genre of portraiture, 'His Majesty himself sat for his likeness, and also ordered to have the likenesses taken of all the grandees of the realm' (Blochmann 1927, 113-15). In integrating portraiture as part of the atelier's curriculum, Mughal artists of the late sixteenth century were now able to capture the personas and visages of the descendents of Timur and of the courtiers affiliated to the Mughal courts. These portrait studies were not merely a 'likenesses' but rather 'true' portrait studies (Losty, in press).

Understanding the development of the portrait studies in Mughal and Indian painting in general is rather complex. In the pre-Mughal period, as seen in Rajput and Sultanate paintings, artists followed the general trend of illustrating individuals in full profile, which was suitable for the horizontal format of early manuscript paintings. By the Akbar period, portraiture became a specific genre, independent from manuscript paintings and used to record the faces of imperial subjects and political affiliates. In this period, through the guidance of Persian master artists, portraiture reflected naturalism and the shift from profile to a naturalistic three-quarter view. The Safavid approach introduced by Mir Sayyid Ali, and his contemporaries to the Mughal atelier at Kabul, focused on the expressiveness of lines which emphasised the outlines and forms of figures, whereas his student Basawan explored the positioning of individuals in space

and their true physiognomy (Beach 1992, 50). However, it was the influence of European examples that gave Mughal artists the stimulus to effectively produce individual portrait studies.

By the 1580s, examples of European prints and engravings illustrating scenes from the Bible and promoting Christianity were brought by Jesuit travellers and priests to the Mughal court. Through viewing these examples, Mughal artists would become aware of ideas including *chiaroscuro,* aerial perspective, modelling fabrics in a manner to show the folds and reflections of light, as well as 'new techniques of creating physical substance' (Beach 1992, 20). The awareness of these new ideas gave rise to realistic portraiture. Akbar's historian Abu'l Fazl was so impressed with the new style that he stated that these portraits exemplified that 'Those who have passed away have received a new life, and those who are still alive have immortality promised to them' (Beach 1992, 20). Fazl's bold remark was very likely to have reflected Akbar's own opinion.

Through assimilating various aspects of the Persian Safavid, pre-Mughal Indian and western styles, Mughal artists were rapidly producing portraits of the leading elite. While portraits of the emperor were by far the most popular, artists also produced studies of courtiers, neighbouring Rajput kings, as well as saints and fakirs. In the early stages, artists began with producing individual portrait studies, offering a full length profile view set against a solid background as seen in the example of the portrait of Zain Khan Koka (figure 127). Within a few years, Manohar, one of the leading artists of Akbar's atelier, would shift from individual studies to inventing the concept of the group portrait. Through this innovative approach, he was able to capture the dynamic interactions between Akbar and his subjects (Losty, in press). Manohar, inspired by the idea of the *darbar*, concentrated on intimate gatherings and depicted them as 'small private meetings at which the Emperor appears not in a formal *jharoka* setting but on a canopied platform or throne surrounded by a few selected noblemen. The artist suppresses action and gives his quietly standing figures more substance, emphasizing in particular the heads in relation to the bodies, which allows him to define character more strongly and to convey inward psychic life' (Beach and Koch 1997, 134). Manohar's group portrait of 'Akbar in old age' demonstrates his achievement in conveying the private conversation that takes place between him and his courtier, with his sons engaged in discussion in the background (figure 128).

Akbar's son Prince Salim, who would become the emperor Jahangir, also held the art of painting in high regard and would assert his influence on the artists of his father's ateliers in Kabul and Lahore from 1585 to 1598 (Stronge 2002, 110-12). During his rebellious phase, Jahangir set up an independent and rival workshop in Allahabad from 1599 to 1604, where many artists experimented with European techniques. From the onset, he was an inquisitive patron who sought perfection and 'commanded naturalistic and unceremonious paintings in Allahabad' (Leach 1995, 152). In his memoirs, Jahangir (1968, 20-21) wrote:

> As regards myself, my liking for painting and my practice in judging have arrived at such a point that when any work is brought before me, either of deceased artists or those of the present day, without the names being told me, I say on the spur of the moment that it is the work of such and such a man. And if there be a picture containing many portraits, and each face the work of a different master, I can discover which face is the work of each of them. If any other person has put in an eye and eyebrows on a face, I can perceive whose work the original face is, and who has painted the eye and eyebrows.

Without doubt, Akbar and Jahangir were responsible for the maturity and stylistic evolution of the Mughal portrait. Although Mir Sayyid Ali and Basawan played a central role in encouraging artists to achieve naturalism in their paintings, it was during the reign of Jahangir that there were major developments in the genre. Presents brought to the Mughal court included oval miniature portraits, Renaissance medals, and cameos inspired Jahangir's artists and craftsmen. A popular anecdote recounted by many scholars is from the memoirs of Sir Thomas Roe. Roe offers a first hand account of his visit to the court of Jahangir and how 'Jahangir's 'Chief Paynter' took away Roe's precious portrait of a lady, producing five almost indistinguishable versions in 1616' (Stronge 2002, 138). This memoir not only confirms that European portraits were brought to India, but also the fact that Jahangir as well as his artists had access to such unique specimens of art. Another major development, directly influenced by the presence of Renaissance medallions and cameos at the court, was that Jahangir's jewellers would mimic the European tradition and produce their cameos of their patron. In these decorative studies, Jahangir as well as Shah Jahan would be presented in rigid profile.

In the Indian painting tradition, it was not uncommon to depict individuals in profile. In fact, in Jain and the pre-Mughal Hindu paintings, it was the preferred format for artists. It was during the early Mughal tradition that artists such as Manohar were influenced by Safavid painting and opted for the more naturalistic three-quarter profile view. This introduction of rigid profile portraits, through the examples of cameos and Renaissance medallions, directly affected the painterly style of the Mughal atelier. Artists would change from illustrating portraits in three-quarter view to strict profile. Through the influence of Jahangir, artists began to illustrate portraits in which the sitter 'stands with the body facing outwards past the viewer, showing more than one would expect of the front of the chest, and with the face in full profile, while the feet are lined up in the same direction as the face. This type of twisted and unnatural posture remained the norm for Mughal portraits for the next two centuries' (Losty, in press).

It can be suggested that the shift from a three-quarter to profile views occurred as a result of two consequences. Losty (in press) hypothesises 'in contrast to his father, he [Jahangir] prefers to be shown in full profile, and at this early state of his pictorial sensitivity that it was the Hindu portraiture tradition which influenced him. The possibility was obviously there he was half-Rajput himself, and he very likely felt he looked better in profile than in three-quarter face.' The second source of influence was through the western examples, such as gifts of medals and cameos that depicted portraits in full profile and were suggestive of the 'subject's imperial claims and pretensions' (Losty, in press). The style presented in cameos, medals and coins were readily copied at the Mughal court and, by 1611, coins picturing Jahangir were always in profile (Losty, in press). For the artist Manohar, the change from three-quarter to strict profile portraits had a profound impact on his artistic style. He realised that, by using profile views in group portrait studies, he could effectively create dynamic interactions amongst the sitters and the illusion of three-dimensionality could be better maintained (Losty, in press). This becomes apparent in Manohar's study of 'Jahangir receiving his two sons' (figure 129).

Jahangir was a highly influential patron and his influence on the genre of portraiture ensued. Possibly one of the most remarkable outcomes of his direct patronage was the ability of Mughal artists to understand and effectively produce allegorical portraits. With examples of western engravings and prints readily available, Mughal artists began to experiment with the overt symbolism that was presented to them. Two examples of allegorical portraiture include 'Jahangir embracing Shah Abbas I' (figure 130), where the Emperor is depicted standing on a globe, and 'Jahangir

preferring a Sufi Shaikh to Kings' (figure 131) that illustrated the emperor seated on an hour glass and showing 'disdain for worldly power and his preference for spiritual matter' (Beach 1992, 104). One of the most important western symbols to be incorporated into Mughal portraits was the nimbus or sun halo around the emperor's portrait. This symbol was 'contrived from images of the Immaculate Conception by Albrecht Dürer in 1516, and would emphasise Jahangir's special set-apart nature' (Losty, in press). Therefore, Jahangir's portraits would effectively communicate to viewers his sovereignty and would become an imperial emblem that would later be adopted by Shah Jahan (Beach and Koch 1997, 160). Of greater consequence, the symbol of the nimbus would appear in portrait studies long after Shah Jahan's reign and would even be adopted by Rajput artists in their portraits of their kings. By using this symbol in any portrait study, the viewer would immediately become aware of the sitter's imperial status.

Imperial patronage continued under the direction of Jahangir's son Shah Jahan. Although many of Jahangir's artists would continue to work for the new emperor, their artistic style, particular in the case of portraiture, was inherently rooted in the ideas of the earlier period. Nonetheless, these artists would make important contributions to the Mughal tradition. Following in the footsteps of Manohar's group portrait studies, the Shah Jahani atelier established a new group portraiture convention - to visualise the dynastic succession of the Mughal emperor. In these contrived studies, the reigning emperor was depicted alongside his deceased predecessor(s). Forming these group portrait studies, Shah Jahan's artists needed to refer to the paintings by their predecessors. Portraits produced by Jahangir's artists provided the ideal representation of the early Mughal rulers ranging from Timur to Jahangir. Abu'l Hasan's 'Darbar of Jahangir' (figure 132) and Govardhan's 'Timur handing the imperial crown to Babur in the presence of Humayun' (figure 133) provided Shah Jahan's artist Hashim (c. 1650) the correct iconography to prepare his work 'Emperor Timur enthroned with his descendants' (figure 134). Tracing the portraits in Abu'l Hasan and Govardhan's works, Hashim could gather the various iconographies to illustrate the descendents of Timur. While these portraits can be understood as a manner to 'extol the legitimacy of the Mughals and document the symbolic transmission of power from monarch to his heir', Hashim's study of the Mughal rulers (Timur, Babur, Humayun, Akbar and Jahangir) systematised their representation by following the iconography established by his predecessors Abu'l Hasan and Govardhan (Okada 1992, 32). Using the pre-established iconographies of the emperors, he illustrated Timur, Babur, Humayun and Akbar in

three-quarter profile and drew Jahangir in profile. Hashim's group portrait of the Mughal rulers would later become the model for his successors to follow. This theoretical approach to understanding the systemisation of portraiture in the seventeenth century has yet to be documented or examined at length.

In the post-Shah Jahani period through to the early eighteenth century, portrait studies were rather simplistic and austere, as artists lost the motivational source that had been provided by the early Mughal patrons. Establishing portrait studies of the later Mughal emperors would merely fulfil the needs of historical documentation. Under the direction of Farrukh Siyar (r. 1712-19) and Muhammad Shah (r. 1719-48), there was a revival in the Mughal tradition and the genre of portraiture was injected with life. Nonetheless, in this eighteenth century period, artists would always reflect on the past and look to the portrait studies of Abu'l Hasan, Govardhan and Hashim, as they believed it was the ideal manner by which to represent a Mughal emperor.

1. Formats of portraiture

Through the influence of Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan, the artists of the Mughal atelier would use a variety of compositional formats to portray an individual or a group study. In the early period, under Akbar, it would be common to produce simple illustrations that depicted a full-length study of an individual standing in an undefined space against a solid background. Within a short period of time, artists would be more experimental and develop new approaches. As a result, there were several ideal formats that were appropriate for imperial portrait studies. An emperor could be pictured enthroned, at a *darbar* surrounded by an intimate group, or even in a *jharoka* - a more public setting surrounded by courtiers. Other formats included terrace scenes, equestrian portraits or pictured an individual against a generic landscape setting.

The archetypal portrayal of the emperor enthroned could be used in a variety of settings. A classic portrait of the emperor seated on his throne would record his succession and without doubt would appeal to any of the Mughal rulers. Portraits of the emperor seated on a throne could also be used to form intimate scenes documenting private interactions between the emperor and either family members or courtiers. Manohar's portrait of 'Jahangir receiving his two sons', is one example of a private meeting (figure 129).

As previously mentioned, Mughal artists were captivated with Renaissance medallions and cameos. In these types of portraits, Jahangir would be presented in

profile, either bust length or should length, with one hand resting on the parapet or *jharoka* (window) frame (figure 135). Artists would also modify this style so that the depiction of the emperor at the window would 'imitate the *darshan*, the daily showing of the Emperor's person at the *jharoka* window' (Losty, in press). In this period, Manohar elaborated the *jharoka* format to create powerful images of the emperor holding *darbars* (Losty, in press). The celebration of a *darbar* provided artists another opportunity to depict the status of a Mughal emperor, to 'reaffirm and enhance the ties between the emperor and his administrators, and to provide a performative spectacle, linking the ruler and his court with the people' (Barringer 2006, 176). During these *darbars*, the emperor would display to his audience his authority. Along the outer wall of the Mughal fort (in the Hall of Public Audience) there was a *jharoka-i darshan* (viewing window) from which the emperor could make his public appearance (Beach and Koch 1997, 135). Scenes by artists such as Manohar illustrated the emperor seated on an elevated throne, with his sons or principal courtiers beside him, and the remainder of the court gathered below (figures 129 and 136) (Losty, in press). While these *darbar* scenes incorporated the iconography of the emperor alongside the faces of his numerous administrators, each identifiable through the lightly inscribed titles or names beside each figure, these scenes gave way to a new style of individual and group portraits.

One of the more popular formats of portraiture, which could be used to illustrate any individual and not just imperial figureheads, was to illustrate a full-length portrait study positioned in profile against an ambiguous landscape setting as seen in Figure 40. This approach could be used to picture officer, courtiers and courtesans. The background of the portrait was typically filled with a dense shade of green to suggest the outdoor setting, sometimes completed with individual flower settings in the foreground. This format of portraiture became popular with artists in the late seventeenth century and continued through to the eighteenth century. In Awadh during the later eighteenth century, there was a decisive shift in these portrait studies which were set outdoors. Instead of ambiguous landscape setting, artists began to use realistic landscape settings for the backgrounds. Not only did they use this technique in their own works, but also artists often modified seventeenth and early eighteenth century studies through over-painting the backgrounds (figure 41). This is visible in many of the paintings in Antoine Polier's collection and by the hand of Mihr Chand himself that will be viewed momentarily.

In the seventeenth century, there was yet another common portraiture convention that was used not only by Mughal artists but also by their Rajput

contemporaries. Using a white marble terrace as the setting, a ruler could be illustrated either standing or kneeling on a carpet, positioned in profile. Similar to the previously mentioned format, the terrace portrait offered a generic setting that could be applied to any ruler. While the origin of the terrace portrait has not been fully studied, Manohar utilised a similar style, where he situated figures on a canopied platform as seen in figure 128.

Finally, there are two further portraiture formats. Both the oval miniature format and the equestrian portrait are based on European conventions. The oval miniature style was introduced to Mughal artists through the works of English artists including Isaac Oliver and Nicholas Hilliard which were brought to the Mughal court by Sir Thomas Roe (Stronge 2002, 138). Appropriating this approach, artists began to coin shoulder or waist-length profile portraits of emperors, such as Shah Jahan, in miniature oval frames. In some of the examples, artists would encompass the portrait within a decorative frame (figure 137). Equestrian portraits, on the other hand, ingeniously expressed an individual's strength in battle as well as his skill as a hunter (figure 138). These portraits illustrated an individual at an advantage, wearing his military regalia and holding a spear in one hand. These portraits could often correlate to specific incidents or battles where the sitter had an immense success.

3. *Mihr Chand's interpretation of the Mughal portrait*

In the mid-eighteenth century, portrait was still a popular genre in the Mughal and Awadhi traditions. While eighteenth century artists propagated and recycled the iconography of sixteenth and seventeenth century political figureheads, they were also challenged to establish new portraits of the current political allies and adversaries, foreign dignitaries, and Mughal courtiers who were in the centre of the political arena. For these artists, it was essential that they capture an individual's persona into a distinct iconography that could be then recycled by contemporary artists and future artists.

Awadhi artists producing these new portrait studies were targeting both local patrons as well as European collectors who desired to acquire a series of portrait studies that documented the dynastic succession of Mughal emperors and that could be assembled into beautiful albums. In some cases, these eighteenth century albums would also include portrait studies of Persian and Afghan enemies of the Mughal Empire

including Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali (Shah Durrani).[81] A serious problem caused by European collectors (while having good intentions) is that they would often mis-identify portraits and then inscribe or paste erroneous titles beneath each work (in Persian, French, or English). This would then cause some confusion for artists who might accept the incorrect identification as truth, and then copy the iconography of that particular individual and continue to mis-identify the sitter. We will see several cases of this happening in the eighteenth century in the following sections.

Portraiture was Mihr Chand's favourite genre. Aside from generating portraits of the deceased Mughal emperors, the artist successfully established new iconographies of politicians such as Zabita Khan of Farrukhabad and Emperor Shah Alam II. In producing his portrait studies of the Mughal emperors, Mihr Chand implicitly knew that he was required to follow a specified facial iconography of rulers in order for them to be recognised. The artist's fluency with the concepts and standards of Mughal portraiture is clearly exhibited in his utilisation and continuation of the common formats. These included depicting an individual enthroned, standing or sitting on a terrace, standing in a generic landscape setting, bust-length portraits set within a *jharoka* window frame, or on horseback.

The notion of producing portraits of deceased individuals, including past Mughal emperors and officers, was not only out of historical necessity. While studies of the early rulers would provide images for future generations, in the eighteenth century it was in vogue to produce albums of portraits of the descendents of Timur. Many of these albums were acquired by European officers and brought back to the west. To produce such an exhaustive work, late Mughal artists relied on the iconographies of the early Mughal emperors produced in the seventeenth century.

The technique used and accepted by Indian artists over the centuries, to transfer and replicate iconographies over time, was through the aide of a *charba* or tracing, made from a fine layer of animal skin. Placing the material over an original drawing, the artist would trace parts of a composition or the full picture. Next, the artist would finely punch holes into the material. Placing the tracing on a blank sheet, the artist would apply a carbon based dry pigment onto the tracing that would fall through the holes and leave the outlines of the original image. From this point, the artist would begin his work. This use of a *charba* was commonplace and accepted in the Mughal tradition. For

[81] Portraits of the Afghan ruler Ahmad Shah Abdali or Shah Durrani, produced in Awadh after 1758, can be explained as a consequence of the Nawab of Awadh's support of the Afghan ruler to reclaim Delhi from the Maratthas between 1757 and 1758.

Awadhi artists, using pre-established iconography of the imperial rulers or courtiers through the aide of a *charba* was an ideal solution. For Mihr Chand, Gentil's collection offered him a selection of portrait studies of seventeenth century figures.

Mihr Chand's portrait of Humayun, based on a portrait from Gentil's collection, is an excellent example of the artist recycling an existing illustration (figure 118). This study also brings to light the problem that Mihr Chand was unaware that the inscription and identity of the sitter was incorrect. The original work was inscribed in French '*cha abbas Ier'* and in Persian '*tasvir-i shah abbas*' implying that the sitter was the Persian ruler Shah Abbas I (d. 1629), who was influential during the reign of Jahangir (figure 139).[82] Unbeknown to Mihr Chand, he had in fact replicated a portrait of emperor Humayun.

The original study of Humayun was a partially painted drawing from which the Mihr Chand created his unique rendition. The original scene pictured the emperor Humayun kneeling on a patterned carpet with a falcon perched on a stand to his right. The most visible difference between the original and Mihr Chand's version was the inclusion of a defined landscape in the background. In Mihr Chand's composition, the emperor is pictured kneeling on a Persian carpet placed on a white marble terrace that overlooked the countryside and wearing the traditional Timurid style flowing robes in a pale pink with an azure coloured overlay. On his head he is illustrated wearing a *taq* or *chaghatay* style turban that is datable to the period of Humayun. In transferring the emperor's iconography and attire from an earlier work, Mihr Chand was concerned with the actual setting. Instead of leaving the background empty, he selected to insert a landscape vista that would show a realistic view from the terrace. It is in the landscape that Mihr Chand's trademarks appear. Immediately behind the row of bushes, which separates the foreground from the background, the artist carefully placed his signature miniature trees within a bright grassy plain. At the base of the tree trunks, Mihr Chand cast perfect shadows at a 45-degree angle from the trunks. For the upper half of the image, the artist filled the expanse with a washed blue sky that faded as it reached the horizon point. To complete the picture, Mihr Chand included grey brushstrokes to indicate clouds.

Through analysing the clothing and reviewing portraits from the sixteenth and seventeenth century, it becomes clear that the sitter's clothing and *chaghatay* style turban is associated with the period of Humayun and not of the Persian leader Shah

[82] Gentil's inventory, BnF Ye 62, titled this work as 'le Roi du Perse: Shah Abbas Ier.'

Abbas I (d. 1629) who was often illustrated wearing a distinctive Central Asian cap as pictured in Bishan Das' 'The meeting of Shah Abbas and Khan Alam' from the *Jahangirnama* (figure 140). The iconography of Humayun in Mihr Chand's portrait, kneeling on a carpet and wearing these Timurid-style robes and *chaghatay* cap, had already been established in the period of Akbar and was much earlier than Bishan Das' iconography of Shah Abbas I presented in the *Jahangirnama* (Falk and Archer 1981, plate 1). Mihr Chand was not the only artist to make this mistake. By the early nineteenth century, a Murshidabad artist who was aware of Mihr Chand's portrait replicated a similar style of portrait and inscribed below it 'Shah Abbas Ali Shah' (figure 141).

Mihr Chand's methodology in replicating the original study of 'Shah Abbas Ali Shah' brings to light his inability to identify portraits of the early rulers. However, in creating his new versions, he was aware that he needed to adhere to the original iconography and sitter's posture, costume and accessories. In many of Mihr Chand's copies of older portrait studies, he would follow this same method and only make adjustments to the landscapes or objects in the foreground and background.

A second example that demonstrates Mihr Chand's blind acceptance of the inscriptions below paintings occurred when he was searching for an image of Emperor Babur. In the album presented to Antoine Polier by Emperor Shah Alam II, there was a portrait of a portly man which Polier indentified in French as '*Portrait de Babur*' and in Persian 'Babur-Shah' (figure 142). It is here suggested that Mihr Chand borrowed the iconography of 'Babur' to produce two further versions. The first portrait entitled '*Zahiru'd-din Muhammad Babur Badshah Ghazi*' was included in Polier's album *Genialogie des Empereurs* (figure 143). A second portrait was part of a series of miniature oval portraits that documented the Mughal rulers and leading courtiers (figure 144). After researching portraits of Babur produced in the Akbar period, it can be said with certainty that figure 142 is not Babur. However, it has been possible to ascertain the sitter's identity and it is clear that figure 142 was based on a portrait by the seventeenth century Safavid artist Mu'in Musavvir. Looking at Mu'in Musavvir's double portrait of 'Nawab Mirza Muhammad Baquir and his son Mirza Husayn' dated 1085 AH (1674), it becomes apparent that Mihr Chand's portraits of Babur were in fact depicting Nawab Mirza Muhammad Baquir, a government official (figure 145). Examples of Safavid painting did make their way to the Mughal studio, so the fact that an artist adapted the portrait to fit within a Mughal context is somewhat curious. Though more surprising is the fact that Mihr Chand was truly unaware of the correct

iconography and style of clothing of the early Mughal emperor who flourished almost a century before Baquir.

Mihr Chand employed similar techniques to copy these portrait studies. Through the aid of a *charba*, the artist appropriated the posture, physiognomy, and the general composition of 'Babur'. The first version, inscribed in Persian '*Zahiru'd-din Muhammad Babur Badshah Ghazi*' can be simply described as a portrait of a haloed man, seated with his legs crossed on a carpeted terrace, with bolsters supporting his form and two decorative pieces placed before him (figure 143). His face is depicted in three-quarter profile with his body turned toward the viewer. He glances downward looking at his right hand. The juxtaposition of Mihr Chand's version with the work in Polier's album (figure 141) offers various ways by which to authenticate that this newer composition was in fact produced in the later eighteenth century. In this newer composition, the artist was conscious of expanding the space in the foreground and increasing the size of the carpet so that the sitter would have more open space. Next, in painting the background sky, the artist used a gradation of paint so that the blue tones would fade as it reached the balustrade. In drawing the balustrade, the artist opted for a simpler marble barrier and exchanged the hedge for a delicate row of flowers. Rather than copying the intricate patterns of the bolsters and carpeting, the artist simplified the patterns and used the same floral design for all the bolsters. The most noticeable changes made by Mihr Chand were his decision to alter the alignment of the bolsters and to include shadowing beneath the sitter. Through these two adjustments, even though the artist did not change the perspective of the carpet as it followed the seventeenth century Mughal convention, he was able to convey a sense of three-dimensionality within the work.

A final change, which is insightful, was the artist's decision to insert a nimbus, or to encircle the sitter's profile with a halo. This convention, adopted by the artists of Jahangir's studio, was only applied to imperial subjects. In this particular instance, one questions why Mihr Chand added the nimbus. If Mihr Chand accepted this study as 'Babur' and thought it was an early portrait of the emperor, he would have been correct to include the nimbus. However, it could be possible that he was reluctant to question Polier's inscription and blindly followed the orders of his patron. One last note in discussing Mihr Chand's portrait of '*Zahiru'd-din Muhammad Babur Badshah Ghazi*' is that it is surprising that an art historian (Weber 1982, 384) working on this collection neglected to comment on the authenticity of this iconography and accepted Polier's notes that it was a portrait of the Mughal ruler Babur.

The second portrait of 'Babur' can be attributed to Mihr Chand with some difficulty (figure 144). This work was produced as part of a larger genealogical study of the descendents of Timur. On a single folio, eighteen oval miniature portraits were arranged in three rows, starting with Timur and ending with Shah Alam II. The relevance of this second work is that it followed the conventions outlined by Mihr Chand in figure 143. In accepting the iconography of the Babur to be true, it was re-used by Mihr Chand or one of his assistants. In this waist-length portrait, the artist retraced the facial features, expression, gesture and style of turban and clothing of the sitter. More noticeably, the artist included the nimbus to indicate the sitter's imperial status. This case of mistaken identity would have had an impact on the younger generations of artists.

Mihr Chand did not solely rely on the portraits in Gentil's collection. In the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum, there is a portrait of Mir Jafar, the Nawab of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa (r. 1757-60; 1763-65) that is attributed here to Mihr Chand (figure 146).[83] In researching the later Mughal painting, the reconstructed 'St. Petersburg Muraqqa' offered clarification on the identity of the sitter as well as the compositional format. The *nim qalam* portrait of an unidentified 'Courtier in a winter dress' (figure 147) is in fact the basis of Mihr Chand's work (figure 146). It is unclear how the artist would have come across this unfinished composition, in which only the landscape was painted and the portrait was left in the *nim qalam* style, as the miniatures from this album were looted by Nadir Shah in 1739 and re-assembled in Iran (Akimushkin 1996, 11). There is, however, the possibility of other sketches or tracings of this unidentified individual that may have existed in Delhi or in the provinces during the 1750s and 1760s from which Mihr Chand may have drawn to compose his own version.

Mihr Chand's version was inscribed in Persian '*taswir mubasshir jafar hamsare zade khalife sultan.*' However, after comparing portraits of the Nawabs of Bengal produced in Murshidabad in the 1750s and 1760s, the identity of Mihr Chand's portrait becomes questionable as the Nawabs were typically dressed in white *jamas* and wore a Mughal-style turban decorated with an aigrette and jewels. In this illustration, the Mughal officer is pictured wearing his ceremonial fur trimmed *khilat* (robes of honour), decorated with his push dagger and sword, standing in profile outdoors. Aside from borrowing the iconography of the ruler, Mihr Chand illustrated the landscape setting

[83] V&A catalogue records state that this work was produced in Lucknow, c. 1760.

with a river and distant vista in the background in his typical fashion. It is this approach to landscape that assists in attributing the painting to Mihr Chand.

Not all of Mihr Chand's portrait studies were misguided. The artist's decision to appropriate the iconography of Mughal rulers from Gentil and Polier's collections makes one question what sources of material were readily available to Mihr Chand in Faizabad outside of the European collections. Until now, there has not been any discovery of copybooks or sketchbooks of artists working in Awadh which would assist in this area of research.

The affiliation to both Gentil and Polier was advantageous for Mihr Chand and he would take every opportunity to use their collections to enhance his knowledge of the Mughal style. Working on the album '*Genialogie des Empereurs*', Mihr Chand produced a portrait of Emperor Farrukh Siyar (r. 1712-19) that was entitled in a cartouche in the lower margin, '*Abu'l-muzaffar Mu'inu'd-din Muhammad Farrukhsiyar*' (figure 148). This portrait by Mihr Chand was discovered by coincidence.[84] During close examination of the lower panel of fabric, along the parapet, Mihr Chand's signature '*amal-i mihr chand*' was found discreetly embedded into the floral scrollwork. Until now, this painting had not been recognised as the work of the artist. In this beautifully executed portrait study of Farrukh Siyar, Mihr Chand selected to inset his portrait within a *jharoka* window frame. In this waist length study, the artist was able to capture the emperor's distinct physiognomy, including his thick, curly sideburns adjoined to his heavy beard, his deep-set eyes, his well-defined eyebrows, and his thick neck. In this stiff but classic pose, the emperor held in his left hand a *sarpesh* (a jewelled turban ornament) and uncomfortably rested his right arm in an angular position with his pointer finger outstretched. To complete the image, Mihr Chand added a simple nimbus in gold that stood out against the dark grey background.

As compared to the portrait studies of emperors such as Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan, studies of Farrukh Siyar were not as prolific. During his reign, however, Mughal artists did contrive his particular likeness and iconography that would be replicated over the following decades. For Mihr Chand, it was very likely that he appropriated this image of Farrukh Siyar from a local source, possibly from a European collection. The artist's reasoning for using the *jharoka* style portrait was to create symmetry within Polier's album *'Genialogie des Empereurs'*, in which portraits of the

[84] In publishing this portrait, Weber (1982, 384) did not attribute or mention that this work was produced by Mihr Chand.

emperors were typically presented standing outdoors on a terrace, seated on a throne, or framed by a *jharoka.*

On close examination of Mihr Chand's portrait of Farrukh Siyar, it becomes apparent that the artist was not only discreetly hiding his signature, but also testing out his shadowing technique. In several portrait studies, which use the *jharoka* window frame, Mihr Chand experimented with the shadowing along the edges of the window frame and curtain. In creating his window frame, in the upper part of the window, the artist followed the conventions used by Mughal artists to draw a rolled up curtain, similar to a Roman blind, which was held up by a single tie. Along the parapet, the artist painted a short panel of fabric that draped over the parapet. In Mihr Chand's approach, from the right side of the upper panel, there was a noticeable shadow, implying that the light source flowed from a frontal direction. We see this same technique used in his portrait of an unidentified Awadhi lady (figure 149).[85]

Imperial portraits were not the only types of works that would have appealed to European and local patrons and collectors of art. Reviewing other portrait studies produced by Mihr Chand, we discover yet another portrait study that followed the *jharoka* convention. Entitled by German scholars (Anand and Goetz 1967) as 'Bahu Begum, Queen of Nawab Shuja ud-Daula', was in fact a stereotypical portrait of a Mughal woman or courtesan of the seventeenth century (figure 150). It is believed that 'with rare exception, there are no Mughal portraits of royal or respectable women. There are some female portraits with inscriptions naming them as women of royal household, but these are idealised renderings, unless of course the artist was a woman' (Topsfield 2004, 299). From the style of her clothing, it immediately becomes apparent that this could not have been 'Bahu Begum' as the style of her dress was the common sort worn by Mughal princesses and women in general and not by an Awadhi woman. Borrowing the imagery from another unknown source, Mihr Chand delicately illustrated a bust-length portrait of a lady, in strict profile, holding a floral stem in each hand. Over her unbound hair she wears a jewelled turban, pearl and emerald earrings, strands of pearls with rubies and emeralds along her neck, down her chest, and encircling her wrists. She also wears a large circular nose ring. Mihr Chand's attention to the woman's details, such as her henna-tipped finger, the floral stems, and the waves of her hair exemplified his exceptional skill in producing realistic portraits. Keeping in the vogue of the Mughal seventeenth century, Mihr Chand did not alter the appearance of the dark solid backdrop. The only visible adjustments the artist made, similar to his approach in

[85] This portrait will be discussed at the end of the chapter.

'Abu'l-muzaffar Mu'inu'd-din Muhammad Farrukhsiyar' (figure 148), was to the left side of the curtain panel, where he inserted a slight shadow to indicate that the light source would have been from the viewer's direction.

Another portrait by Mihr Chand worth mentioning in this section is the portrait of the Mughal officer Shayasteh Khan (figure 85). The artist's partiality towards adjusting original seventeenth century compositions led him to borrow the original work by the artist Illiyas Khan from the collection of Jean Baptist Gentil (figure 86). This scene commemorated Shayasteh Khan's success at the Battle of Chittagon in 1664. Shayasteh Khan, an officer of the Mughal army, received the highly esteemed title of *Amir ul-Umra* from emperor Shah Jahan (r. 1628-58) (Beale 1894, 250). He served as the governor of Berar in 1638, Gujarat in 1656, and during the reign of Aurangzeb he was assigned to Bengal in 1666. Shayasteh Khan is known foremost for his successful campaign in 1664, against the Maghs of Arakan and the Portuguese at Chittagon, who were 'engaged in piracy and slave raiding against the costal inhabitants of Bengal' (Richards 1996, 168). The Mughal victory offered protection for the Bengalis who had fled the coastal regions.

Using the aid of a tracing, Mihr Chand replicated the equestrian portrait of Shayasteh Khan and followed Illiyas Khan's *nim qalam* or grisaille approach. In this scene, on a plateau with his troops and fortress in the distance, Shayasteh Khan is seated astride a fawn coloured horse that is posed standing on its hind legs. The officer is dressed in a translucent white *jama* over a pair of green trousers and has a simple white turban. As a sign of strength and valour, a dagger is tucked into his golden waist-sash and in his right hand he holds a lance. Although his figure obscures the remaining arms, the hilt of his sword and a set of bows and an arrow appear protruding from behind.

There are visible differences between the two works. While Illiyas Khan's original showed a combination of the *nim qalam* drawing with touches of colour that were thinly applied to the officer's clothing and accessories, the saddle of the horse, and select elements of the landscape, Mihr Chand applied pigments with a slightly heavier hand. While preserving the *nim qalam* style, his colour choices were more vivid and visible. Bushes were painted with a deep green and he applied bluish hues to denote aerial perspective. Furthermore, Mihr Chand replaced the sepia and golden toned background with bold blue brushstrokes across the upper folio to indicate the sky. To complete his sky, the artist placed his signature dark grey clouds, indicated by hasty brush strokes in the left and right-most corners, and three clouds painted in shades of white and grey in the centre. Lastly, Mihr Chand added minor details such as a bow to

accompany the set of arrows, drew in the faces of the soldiers, and cast a heavy shadow underneath the horse's figure. In the mid-eighteenth century, Mihr Chand and his contemporaries were faced with new challenges as they were responsible for coining new portrait studies of the prevailing rulers, princes, provincial governors, and even the European officers. These artists must have been aware that the iconographies that they would establish would have an impact on their contemporaries as well as the younger generations.

In this period, there were limited portrait studies of Ahmad Shah (r. 1748-54), Alamgir II (r. 1754-59), and Shah Alam II (r. 1759-1806) produced in Delhi. For artists to produce portraits of Shah Alam II, they would have needed to follow him from Delhi to the regional courts in order to obtain his patronage. It is here suggested that Mihr Chand produced two identical portraits of Shah Alam II while stationed in Allahabad. These portraits were produced to commemorate the emperor's succession in 1759.

Capturing the physical attributes and regal quality of the young emperor, Mihr Chand produced two exquisitely, almost identical portraits of Shah Alam II, following imperial Mughal guidelines (figures 80 and 83). Mihr Chand illustrated the emperor in strict profile, enthroned on a golden throne with a golden parasol, holding up a volume of what we can insinuate is poetry. Mihr Chand's regal portrait invoked the ethereal nature of Abu'l Hasan's portrait of 'Shah Jahan enthroned' (figure 151). Following the traditional and imperial format, he faced Shah Alam II towards the left with a golden nimbus circling his head to indicate his imperial status. In presenting the emperor, Mihr Chand's work exhibited his meticulous attention to detail and concern with presenting the emperor in an elegant fashion through the artist's excessive use of gold paint to highlight details of the throne, the emperor's clothing, the album he holds, and even the outlines of the white marble balustrade in the background. In illustrating this highly formal composition, Mihr Chand evoked the austerity of the painting style of the Aurangzeb period by positioning the emperor in an unnaturally stiff position, corresponding to the smoothly modelled clothing to accentuate the curves of his figure.

While at first Mihr Chand's two portraits of Shah Alam II can be construed as following the Mughal idiom precisely, there are elements that show the artist's ingenuity. In the previous chapter, in the section on Mihr Chand's chronology of style, the artist's approach to imperial portraiture and his experimentation with shadowing was discussed. Although Mihr Chand's highly formal composition was probably intended for an imperial patron, his experimentation with light sources and the casting of shadows was discrete. In these two paintings, Mihr Chand structured the composition

as if the source of sunlight was projecting rays from the left hand corner. As a result, the artist cast shadows from behind the emperor's figure and onto the bolsters, on the right edge of the parasol, and from the front legs of the golden throne.

The two compositions produced by Mihr Chand were assembled into albums belonging to Antoine Polier. Beneath each illustration they were inscribed in Persian the complete title of the emperor '*Abu al-Muzaffar Jalal al-Din Shah Alam Padshah Ghazi*'. The first portrait, which is signed 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram', was placed in an album of various paintings, many of which were produced by Mihr Chand (figure 80). The second portrait, unsigned though attributed to Mihr Chand, was arranged in Polier's album '*Geniaologie des Empereurs*' (figure 83).

While Mihr Chand offered a unique iconography of the emperor that could be replicated by his contemporaries, there were other artists who coined portraits of the emperor as well. Looking at albums assembled in the 1760s and 1770s, we find at least one portrait of Shah Alam II that was based on Mihr Chand's iconography. Gentil's album, entitled '*Recueil des portraits des empereurs mogols de Delhi*', included an almost identical study of Shah Alam II kneeling on an imperial throne holding a golden-coloured book.[86] Dip Chand as well as an unknown artist of Gentil's studio also produced portraits of the emperor.[87] Mihr Chand's influential iconography of Shah Alam II did not affect Dip Chand. This Murshidabad artist had the opportunity to compose his version during the emperor's visit to Patna in 1764 (figure 113). The visit to the province of Bengal resulted as the emperor seeking to obtain the support of his allies, to assist in keeping the East India Company from territorial expansion. Dip Chand's formal study of the emperor situated the emperor on a terrace underneath a *shamiyana* or canopy, kneeling on a throne, wearing a white *jama* and without his *khilat*, or robes of honour. In another album once owned by Gentil, there is a four-part narrative series which pictures the emperor's arrival on a palanquin, the emperor greeted by Shuja ud-Daula and Asaf ud-Daula, Shuja ud-Daula speaking to European officers, and the final scene was a panorama of the Allahabad fort. The historical event this narrative series documents is the discussions leading to the signing of the Treaty of Allahabad of 1765. There are similarities in the illustration of the emperor's physiognomy to the work of Mihr Chand.

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[86] BnF, Department des Estampes, Od-50.

[87] As of this date, Mihr Chand and Dip Chand's portraits of Shah Alam II are the few that have been identified. In all likelihood there are bound to be others that have yet to be identified.

While only a few examples of portraits of Shah Alam II can be located today, there is the distinct possibility that other portraits of Shah Alam II do exist, but have not been identified. Nonetheless, the lack of portraits of the ruler does overall give the implication of the decline of patronage by the emperor as compared to the patronage by foreign residents and local nobility.

Aside from portraits of Shah Alam II that were produced during the early part of his reign (1759-72), there is some indication that there were opportunities for artists when the emperor returned to Delhi in 1772. Aside from portrait studies, Polier's albums offer evidence that artists were producing illustrations that documented the emperor's victorious return and procession to Delhi, a *darbar* of Shah Alam II, and Shah Alam II's reinstatement at the Shahjahanabad fort in 1772 (figure 152). It is unclear if Mihr Chand was involved in the production of these elaborate scenes.

While the majority of portrait studies that have been examined so far reflect imperial subjects, Mihr Chand was keen to produce portraits of the current political figures. Through his fluency with the Mughal style, he was prepared to use the *jharoka* format to produce at least one further work.[88]

Mihr Chand's presence at the court of Shuja ud-Daula in Faizabad during the 1760s and 1770s would have made him somewhat aware of the political intrigues and situations occurring in northern India. The Nawab of Awadh was constantly looking to make alliances with regional rulers, including the Rohillas, in the interest of protecting his territories from the Marathas and the East India Company. It was very likely that Rohilla Chiefs such as Zabita Khan ventured to Faizabad to discuss warfare tactics with Shuja ud-Daula. Mihr Chand's portrait of Zabita Khan is of particularly great interest, as it is one of the only portraits of the Rohilla chief who had been appointed as the *Amir ul-Umra*, or the protectorate of the Mughal family in Delhi (figure 153). A portrait of another individual with a similar name also exists, of Nawab Zabita Khan Bhatti of Fathabad (r. 1808-16), which should not be confused with this Zabita Khan (Leach 1995, 741).

Mihr Chand's portrait of Zabita Khan followed the *jharoka* style, situating the Rohilla chief within an arbitrary Mughal style window frame. Positioned in profile view, the artist illustrated Zabita Khan stiffly holding the end of a hookah pipe. Using this convention of the *jharoka* frame, Mihr Chand could easily insert the iconography of

[88] While there are numerous unpublished portraits that have been attributed to the style of Mihr Chand, it is only possible here to discuss the works that were signed or can be located. See Sotheby & Co (1968, 1974)

any given figure, and filled in the background space with a solid dark colour. The opportunity for Mihr Chand to compose his study of Zabita Khan, either after a first-hand sighting or after hearing about this chief, would have been during Zabita Khan's visit to Faizabad in 1772 when he was seeking refuge and support from Shuja ud-Daula.

It is highly likely that Mihr Chand also composed numerous other portraits of local nobility and the provincial governors in the 1770s. Unfortunately, as his portrait of Zabita Khan was initially part of an album assembled for Antoine Polier which has long since been dispersed, it is difficult to know if this was part of a series Mihr Chand assembled or composed for his foreign patron or if it was included within a mixed group of paintings and calligraphies.

4. The impact of Tilly Kettle's portraits of Shuja ud-Daula

Mihr Chand's attentiveness towards coining portraiture, specifically studies of Nawab Shuja ud-Daula and of his progeny, are directly linked to the work of the British portrait painter Tilly Kettle. Kettle (1736-89) was the first British portrait painter to experience the journey to India and be granted the opportunity to visit the provincial court of Nawab Shuja ud-Daula in 1772-73. Trained at the prestigious St. Martin's Lane Academy in London, he visited India from 1769-76. During Kettle's first two years in India he was based in Madras, where the scenery of South Indian temple architecture and the 'dancing-girls with the dark skins and elaborate silver jewellery' was alluring and provided the inspiration for his paintings 'Temple scene', 'Dancing girls', and 'Sati scene' (Archer 1979, 71). Kettle also produced portraits of the British officials residing in Madras including Alexander Davidson, Lord Pigot, and Captain Peter Mariette.

Tilly Kettle obtained the honour of an invitation to Awadh through the beneficence of John Cartier, the Governor of Fort William, who wrote to the Shuja ud-Daula in 1771, 'Having learned that the addressee very much wishes to see Mr. Kettle, painter, the writer has ordered him to proceed to Fyzabad and thence to Allahabad after he has taken leave of the Nawab Wazir; says that he is a master of his art and hopes the addressee will be much pleased with him' (CPC 1911, note 973). Aside from Kettle's visual records of his visit to Faizabad, Archer (1979, 74) writes:

> no written account of his stay in Faizabad and we can only surmise his reaction to this very different environment. After Madras and Calcutta with their strongly British air, he must have sensed in Faizabad a strange contrast. From cities of Palladian mansions he suddenly found himself in a completely Indian city with imposing Mughal style buildings and a Muslim way of life. Here was 'oriental'

> India with a wealthy and all-powerful Nawab surrounded by numerous progeny, a harem of seven hundred or more wives...

Although Kettle's visit to the Nawabi court was extremely brief, from 1773 to 1774, his numerous portrait studies of the Nawab as well as British officers had a profound impact on several Awadhi artists.[89] His fascination with courtesans and the role of native women in Faizabad also resulted in a single portrait of a 'Dancing girl', which was later copied by Awadhi artists (figure 154).[90] While it can be assumed that a few of the portraits were commissioned by Shuja ud-Daula, there were other patrons in the region including Sir Robert Barker, an East India Company general, who desired a visual record to mark his own political achievements in Awadh.

In Chapter 2, I addressed the paucity of early portrait studies of Shuja ud-Daula by local artists. Through reviewing Tilly Kettle's portraits of the Nawab of Awadh, which were produced in 1772-1773, it comes as no surprised that his paintings would directly inspire local artists to create their own portrait studies in a similar style. Looking at both Mihr Chand and Nevasi Lal's studies, which were directly modelled on Kettle's work, I question, what was the exact impetus for local artists to follow in Kettle's lead? Archer (1979, 74), in following this theory, mentioned that the French officer Jean Baptiste Gentil personally borrowed four oil paintings by Kettle from Shuja ud-Daula and requested that the artists in his workshop reproduce these in miniature. Her research suggested that Gentil directed his artists to imitate Kettle's style.

According to Gentil's memoirs, he listed four paintings that he borrowed from the Nawab. These included: 'Nawab Shuja ud-Daula with his seven sons', 'Nawab Shuja ud-Daula with his son Asaf ud-Daula', 'Nawab Shuja ud-Daula on a elephant with an English general', and 'Nawab Shuja ud-Daula on horseback wearing a Maratha costume holding a spear in his hand' (Milner 1926). Although the memoirs mentioned these four paintings, it is difficult to corroborate that Gentil's artists fulfilled this request. From this list, Kettle is known to have only produced two similar works, 'Nawab Shuja ud-Daula and his son Asaf ud-Daula' and 'Nawab Shuja ud-Daula with his ten sons'.

Whilst the details of Gentil's memoirs may be inaccurate, we know that Kettle did produce the following paintings in Faizabad: 'Shuja ud-Daula, Nawab of Awadh

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[89] See Appendix IV for a list of Kettle's portraits painted in Faizabad.

[90] A portrait of an Indian woman, attributed by Sven Gahlin to Mihr Chand, provides an example of the versions produced by Faizabad artists after Tilly Kettle. This will be discussed in Chapter 5.

and four sons with General Barker and military officers' (figure 155), 'Shuja ud-Daula, Nawab of Awadh, holding a bow' (figure 156), and 'Shuja ud-Daula with Asaf ud-Daula' (figure 70). In searching for paintings by Gentil's atelier, only one portrait by Nevasi Lal can be located. Lal produced a study of 'Nawab Shuja ud-Daula with his ten sons' based on Kettle's model (figure 69). However, Gentil's memoirs seem inaccurate as he mentioned that Shuja ud-Daula was surrounded by seven sons; Nevasi Lal illustrated ten sons. As Gentil's memoirs were posthumously edited, it is difficult to know if this was an error on Gentil's part or if Nevasi Lal produced more than one version. Nevasi Lal's portrait, however, was part of Gentil's collection that was brought to France and is currently in the collection of the Musée Guimet in Paris (figure 69). On its reverse, Gentil had inscribed, 'Painted at Faizabad by Nevasilal, Indian artist, 1774.'

A second portrait which, according to Gentil, was reproduced by an Awadhi artist, 'Shuja ud-Daula and his son Asaf ud-Daula' (figure 70), remains an enigma as only the location of Kettle's original can be traced and there is no evidence of the Awadhi version. According to Archer (1979, 75):

> Gentil showed it [the Awadhi version] to Shuja ud-Daula who was so pleased with it that he refused to give it back and instead presented it to the British Resident. When Gentil protested, the Nawab asked him why he needed the picture since his likeness must be engraved upon his heart. Gentil replied that he wanted it for showing to his friends back in France and that since the Nawab had taken away his copy, he should be allowed to have the original.

Kettle's original of 'Shuja ud-Daula and Asaf ud-Daula', obtained by Gentil, was donated to the *Cabinet du Roi* at Versailles in 1778, where it remains today (figure 70). The copy produced by Gentil's artist cannot be located.

The recent translation of Polier's (2001) letters sheds new light into the reproduction of Kettle's portraits by local artists in Faizabad. While Polier's letters do not specifically mention Kettle's portraits, it is the result of his request to the artist Mihr Chand that offers the visual evidence that local artists were aware of Kettle's work as early as December 1773, thereby insinuating that Polier's workshop was working on this request possibly before Gentil's artist, Nevasi Lal. In a letter to Mihr Chand, Polier (2001, fol. 37a) wrote: 'The portrait of Nawab [Shuja-ud-Daula] that you had sent for me has been held back by Monsieur Gentil for himself. Make a similar portrait and keep it for me. You shall be generously rewarded when I reach Faizabad if you do my work with the care and attention.' From the references in Polier's letters (2001, 13a, 14a, fol.

37a, 109b), it becomes apparent that he requested Mihr Chand to produce approximately six to ten studies of Shuja ud-Daula.

Reviewing the Polier-Hamilton albums, as well as dispersed Polier album pages, there is visual evidence that clearly shows that Mihr Chand was responsible for producing at least nine portrait studies.[91] Not surprisingly, these nine studies emulated the style of Tilly Kettle and followed one of three different compositional formats. In illustrating the Nawab, the formats used by the artist include a full-length portrait of Shuja ud-Daula surrounded by his ten sons inside a building (figure 157), a full-length study of the Nawab standing outdoors wearing a Maratha costume and holding a bow (figure 159) and, lastly, shoulder-length portraits of the Nawab inset within an oval frame (figure 2).

In discussing Mihr Chand's portraits of Shuja ud-Daula, the question arises, why did the artist need to copy or appropriate heavily from Tilly Kettle's paintings? It can be suggested that Mihr Chand did not have any examples from which he could copy the Nawab's physiognomy, and Kettle's works offered a precise and realistic representation of the ruler. For Mihr Chand and the Awadhi artists, perhaps it would have been impossible for them to obtain first hand observations of the portly ruler as he was typically engaged in battles or protecting his province.

Kettle's various portrait studies not only provided Mihr Chand with the Nawab's physiognomy, but also introduced him to new western conventions of portraiture. Kettle's portraits of 'Nawab of Arcot Muhammad Ali Khan' and 'Nawab Shuja ud-Daula and Asaf ud-Daula' both incorporated elements of the local environment to frame the composition. In composing background scenery, Kettle adopted the local architectural style and inserted a slightly pointed archway or a section of a pillar (figure 155). Kettle also introduced, in his portrait of 'Shuja ud-Daula, Nawab of Oudh, holding a bow', a glimpse of the local landscape and a method of how to illustrate spatial recession using aerial perspective (figure 156). Furthermore, Kettle's portraits provided examples of how to express atmospheric conditions, such as cloud formations that indicated the imminent arrival of a storm.

Starting with the first compositional format listed above, Mihr Chand illustrated 'Nawab Shuja ud-Daula and his ten sons' (figure 157). His version, picturing a full-length study of the ruler surrounded by his progeny, immediately reminds the viewer of Nevasi Lal's version (figure 69) of the exact subject. These two works are based on

[91] It is probable that are other portraits of Shuja ud-Daula produced by Mihr Chand that have yet to be discovered.

Kettle's masterpiece which has long been missing, possibly even destroyed during the 1857 Uprisings in Lucknow. It is also worthwhile mentioning that Gentil returned to France with Nevasi Lal's version; in 1796, P. Renault created engravings and prints after Nevasi Lal's work (figure 158). Although Kettle's original is no longer extant, Mihr Chand's work can be discussed in relation to Nevasi Lal's work.

In Mihr Chand's group portrait (figure 157), Shuja ud-Daula is situated slightly off-centre underneath a rounded archway flanked by his progeny on either side. While similarities between the original and Mihr Chand's versions are restricted to figural placement only, it is important to examine the changes instigated by the Indian artist. Using a pyramidal composition, Shuja ud-Daula is positioned at the top with his heir apparent Asaf ud-Daula directly standing to his left. The Nawab presides over his ten sons, who are most likely positioned according to their age or rank. With the lack of historical documentation, it is not possible to authenticate the names of the remaining sons, except for the son standing directly to the left and front of Asaf ud-Daula. This son, Saadat Ali Khan, attempted to usurp the Nawabi authority and take over as Wazir to the Mughal emperor towards the end of the eighteenth century.

In Mihr Chand's version, each of the sons are simply dressed in white, long-sleeved garments made of fine muslin with:

> lapels on both sides which were known as *parda* curtains, folded over each other and covered the chest... the left hand lapel was worn below and fixed to the right-hand lapel with bindings and this lapel in turn was attached to that of the left. From the waist a sort of skirt, very wide in circumference, hung down to the ankles. The trousers were tight at the bottom... a sash was tied round the waist' (Sharar 1994, 169).

Each son also wears the traditional Awadhi cap, a dome-shaped turban made of silk with a decorative golden crescent band that ties in the front and is adorned with a *sarpech* or jewelled aigrette. His sons also wear high-heeled curl-toed shoes, which peek out from underneath their long *jamas.*

Shuja ud-Daula and Asaf ud-Daula are distinguished from the other characters as they are pictured wearing an additional robe over their simple *jamas.* Shuja is pictured wearing his ceremonial *khilat,* which he received upon his succession. The *khilat* is a short-sleeve, calf-length coat, fabricated out of a green brocade fabric embellished with gold embroidered pattern and lined in cardinal-red silk. Along the collar, the coat is trimmed in brown fur. Shuja is often portrayed wearing this specific *khilat* in several early portrait studies, including the work by Gobind Singh. Finally, he

is pictured with a push dagger or *katar* tucked into his waist sash and a sword in his right hand. Asaf ud-Daula is also decadently attired. Having a shorter and portly figure, he is adorned with a triple strand of pearls around his neck and a silver brocade coat. Both father and son wear coordinating turbans.

In comparing Mihr Chand's work to Nevasi Lal's version, the most noticeable variation is that they used different backdrops. Instead of following Kettle's original setting (that is, if we assume that Nevasi Lal's version was an accurate copy of Kettle's work), Mihr Chand selected to position the group directly in the centre and beneath a rounded archway. Referring back to the tradition of Mughal architecture, it becomes clear that Mihr Chand and Nevasi Lal were both attempting to illustrate the group standing in a passageway of a pavilion or *baradari.* This type of Mughal building, rectangular in shape, would consist of a series of open arched doorways that would lead to the open covered interior space. In some instances, there was a second arcade of archways that would create a corridor or aisle along the interior of the pavilion. When we look at Nevasi Lal's version, the artist situated the Nawab and his sons inside a corridor with scalloped archways to their left and right. Nevasi Lal's version is rather perplexing, as the artist situated his group portrait on a set of stairs within the pavilion; in a Mughal pavilion it is an unlikely placement for steps.

In comparing Mihr Chand's interior view with the local architecture of Faizabad, it becomes apparent that the artist may have modelled his painting on one of the local residences built for Shuja ud-Daula. One of these buildings, the Dilkusha, was designed by Polier in a mélange of the neoclassical and Mughal styles (figures 13 and 14).[92] A second building is the Asafi Kothi, built in Lucknow by the year 1775. This building also incorporated elements of European architecture including Ionic pilasters and Roman triumphal arches along the exterior colonnade of the building (figure 15) (Tandan 2001). In positioning the Nawab directly beneath the triumphal arch, Mihr Chand may have been aware of the connotation and how appropriately this style reflected the Nawab's elevated position as Nawab Wazir. Understanding and employing western symbols, such as the triumphal arch, was not uncommon within the Mughal idiom. The seventeenth century artist Abu'l Hasan strategically illustrated Jahangir standing on a globe to convey his power (figure 131).

Mihr Chand's group portrait also raises the issue of how the artist dealt with the issue of perspective. While he used Kettle's version as the basis for his group portrait,

[92] Dilkusha' was erected in Faizabad circa 1765-77 as a country house or private residence for Shuja ud-Daula and designed by Antoine Polier. This 'Dilkusha' should not be confused with its namesake in Lucknow.

his artistic training left him unprepared to deal with linear perspective and spatial recession. Instead of achieving a sense of three-dimensionality, he produced a rather flat composition. Some of the minor changes that he made included expanding the horizontal plane, adding windows on left and right, and using the rounded archway supported by ionic columns to achieve a centralised viewpoint. Positioning the figures in a pyramidal format, enhanced by the centralised viewpoint, he was able to create the illusion of spatial recession. In reality, his painting basically forced the viewer's gaze from the lower edge of the painting, towards the centre, and up through the archway to the distant sky. Even though the artist took pain-staking efforts to achieve his 'illusion' he was unable to correct the perspective of the carpet, as he followed the Mughal convention to paint the designs and patterns as though the viewer was looking down from directly above.

If Mihr Chand studied Kettle's original closely, he might have realised that the inclusion of the two steps in the corridor was an innovative technique to position the central figure above the sons and creating the centralised viewpoint. Surprisingly, Nevasi Lal's version shows his ability to grasp the concept of linear perspective. Rather than illustrating the carpet as drawn from a bird's eye viewpoint, he titled the foreground plane so that the carpet receded into the background. The main difference between Mihr Chand and Lal's presentations is that Lal formats the scene into an interior view by closing off the background with a solid wall. Both Mihr Chand and Renault's versions instead lead the viewer's gaze above Shuja ud-Daula to the outdoors.

We now turn to Mihr Chand's next set of portraits of Shuja ud-Daula, where the Nawab is presented standing outdoors in his 'hunting attire' (figures 159, 160, 161 and 162); these are directly based on Tilly Kettle's models. Through appropriating imagery from two of Kettle's works, Mihr Chand produced his own portraits of the Nawab standing outdoors in what is assumed to be his 'hunting attire'. Mihr Chand's exemplary portraits of Shuja ud-Daula following Kettle's models were very different from the early portrait studies of the Nawab produced in Delhi and Awadh. Mihr Chand was responsible for producing four, almost identical, portrait studies illustrating the Nawab in full length, facing the viewer in an outdoor setting.[93] Dressed in winter garments, the Nawab rested his right hand on the tip of his hunting bow and outstretched his left arm, pointing to his elephant and attendants in the background. In the background, on the right, there is an elephant topped with a *howdah* and attended by

[93] These will be discussed in Chapter 7 and listed in Appendix V.

four servants. On the left, immediately behind the Nawab, are another four servants who are dressed in simple white attire.

From Kettle's portrait of 'Shuja ud-Daula, Nawab of Oudh, holding a bow' (figure 156), he appropriated the compositional format of the Nawab standing and holding in his left hand a hunting bow. He even replicated the distant scenery of the servants standing in the background. Mihr Chand was also inspired by the use of light and replicated how the rays of light swept across the image from left to right. However, as Kettle's work only pictured the Nawab waist up, Mihr Chand reflected on another work of Kettle's, 'Shuja ud-Daula, Nawab of Oudh, and four sons with General Barker and military officers', that offered a full length composition of the Nawab with an outstretched hand (figure 155).

The fine detailing of Mihr Chand's portraits of Shuja ud-Daula is exemplary. Focusing on the fine details of the Nawab's clothing, Mihr Chand did not neglect to leave out any details he observed in Kettle's originals. Here the Nawab's clothing consists of calf-length *angarkha* composed of either a gold brocaded fabric or even a warmer Kashmiri pashmina material decorated with an embroidered repeated pattern of *jhar buti* or floral motifs. Each floral motif consists of a single pink flower with greenery and two pink floral *bunds*. Separating the floral motifs are white lattice scrolls that form a loose diamond pattern around the *jhar buti*. The *angarkha* is trimmed with a *zari* border decorated with a repeating pink floral arabesque along the bottom edge and the cuffs of the sleeves. The *magaji*, or inner lining of the dress, is composed of a bright pink silk, as indicated by fabric exposed on the upturned right sleeve. Underneath the *angarkha*, the Nawab has worn a white *nima* or undergarment that is visible along the neckline. The *angarkha*, with its row of golden *ghundi* buttons, is completed with a *patka* or fringed-sash tied around the waist. Shuja ud-Daula wears over the *angarkha*, a *farji* or short knee-length coat that is uniquely embellished with embroidered hunting scenes including a man on horseback hunting an antelope. Other scenes embroidered include a man astride a camel and three men seated in a *howdah* atop an elephant. The *farji* is also trimmed with similar *zari* work as seen on the edges of the *angarkha*. A pelt of rich brown fur drapes the shoulders of the Nawab and reaches down the length of the *farji*. The Nawab's costume also includes a cap made of identical fabric as the *angarkha* and is lined with fur, and a pair of red leather boots decorated with golden embroidery.

While Kettle's portraits offered Mihr Chand the fine details of Shuja ud-Daula's physiognomy and attire, he altered the background setting so that it would reflect a more Mughal or Awadhi feel. Instead of using the western technique of a pillar or

archway as the backdrop, he referred to the traditional style of picturing a ruler with his attendants standing directly behind the ruler, that were commonly used in terrace scenes. Thus, he situated two attendants in white *jamas* behind Shuja ud-Daula. While Mihr Chand's reference to the traditional style is apparent, in general his portraits transcended the conventional ideal as his imagery conveyed a heightened sense of realism in the figural composition and in the representation of textiles and accessories worn by the ruler. As compared to the idealised portraits of Shuja by his contemporaries, Mihr Chand effectively demonstrated that he could create realistic studies. This was a remarkable achievement.

Although Mihr Chand faced difficulties in creating spatial recession in his group portrait of the Nawab, he was able to achieve recession through using aerial perspective in these outdoor portraits. In painting the distant vista, Mihr Chand showed a preference for intense cloud formations. The uppermost clouds would be painted with darker tones, while the clouds near the horizon become gradually lighter. As the landscape recedes to the horizon, it loses its definition. However, in the foreground, he would skilfully paint the tall blades of grass that surround the Nawab's red boots.

The final category of portraits looks at bust-length portraits of Shuja ud-Daula (figures 2, 163, 164, and 165). Mihr Chand's exceptional ability to appropriate imagery from Kettle's originals provided him a method to produce a further four portrait studies for Antoine Polier's collection. Using the physiognomy or visage of Shuja ud-Daula used in the earlier categories, Mihr Chand produced simple bust-length studies of the Nawab. It is difficult to ascertain what style of portraits Mihr Chand copied initially, or which of his portraits of the Nawab was produced first. However, through his preliminary sketches, Mihr Chand was able to reuse the physiognomy of Shuja ud-Daula to create multiple portraits.

Mihr Chand's depiction of Shuja ud-Daula in his group portrait of 'Shuja ud-Daula with his ten sons' (figure 157) was reused to produce an intimate and individual portrait of the Nawab. In figure 163, we see that the artist illustrated a bust-length image of the Nawab in three-quarter profile facing the viewer's left, wearing his fur-trimmed green brocade *khilat* and green striped turban. He also adopted this portrait to be used in a second bust-length version, though with the addition of a cloudy sky in the background (figure 2). The next bust-length portrait was appropriated from Mihr Chand's full-legth portraits of the Nawab standing outdoors (figure 159). In figure 164, we are presented with a shoulder-length snapshot of the Nawab wearing his fur-trimmed

cap and elegantly embroidered and fur-trimmed *angarkha* and facing the viewer directly.

In the Berlin albums, Mihr Chand included a bust-length portrait of Shuja ud-Daula (figure 165); however, its originals remain somewhat mysterious. In this study, Shuja ud-Daula is directly facing the viewer and wearing his fur-trimmed green brocade khilat with a maroon, rather than green, turban. With his thin lips pressed together, his moustache pointing downwards at an almost perfect 45-degree angle, the noticeable excessive jowls on the sides of his face, and bags underneath his eyes, Shuja ud-Daula's unhealthy appearance is quite unlike the robust, energetic portraits of the Nawab out on a hunt.

Mihr Chand's portraits of Shuja ud-Daula clearly reflected his desire to promote a realistic picture of the Nawab, capturing every minute detail from the jowls on his face to the embroidery details of his clothing. His portraits offer a fresh approach to the established genre. His portraits are a radical departure from the early examples of portraits produced in Awadh, such as the example by Gobind Singh (figure 23) of the Nawab during the 1750s and 1760s. Perhaps Mihr Chand believed the western formats would appeal more to his European clientele. Even though the artist displayed his particular interest in experimenting with illustrating portraits from different vantage points (instead of the preferred Mughal method of illustrating in profile), he struggled and could not achieve a truly realistic portrayal. In portraits where the Nawab was positioned facing the viewer, he was unable to draw the sitter's eyes at an even level. In his bust-length portrait from the Berlin collection, the composition reveals that Shuja's right eye slightly droops and the left eye and eye-lid are drawn larger in proportion (figure 165). For Mihr Chand, the realistic depiction of the sitter's gaze was often off-balance and resulted in a comical or cross-eyed gaze. This will reappear in his portraits of courtesans. A final note, when viewing Mihr Chand's portfolio, is that his portraits were not the only images that reflected his re-usage of imagery to create new or additional compositions.

After Kettle's departure from Awadh, Mihr Chand was still susceptible to western influences and continued to experiment with new idea. While Kettle's examples provided the artist with examples of portraiture of the Nawab of Awadh, the new examples he encountered included studies of courtesans or nude women. In the tradition of painting in India, studies of the female form including nudes were typically modelled on courtesans, lower class women, and from conjectured images from the artist's mind. For Mihr Chand, western examples provided new positions and vantage points to picture the undressed female form. One portrait, inscribed in Persian '*tasvir-i khiyal*' or 'a picture of an apparition', pictured a nude woman crouching on one knee and with her hands held above her to drape translucent fabric over part of her nude form (figure 166). Milo Beach (1974, 38) has suggested that images such as these were portraits of women bathing, which also appeared in a *Sat Sai* manuscript and were in fact based on a western source. While it is debatable what is the original source for this crouching form, Polier's collection provided one similar study of a nude female, which Mihr Chand would have undoubtedly had access to (figure 167).

In the Polier albums, there are two, almost identical, studies of a reclining European woman by Mihr Chand (figures 168 and 169). These two works are in fact representations of a reclining Venus, similar in compositional format to the work of the sixteenth century Italian artist Titian. In these works, a nude woman is pictured lying on the ground with her body outstretched. Mihr Chand positioned her upper body propped up against a bed of white silk and red velvet, with her head resting in her left hand. Lying on her left side, she rested her outstretched right leg on her bent left leg. To stage the scene, he inserted a single pane of red velvet on the right and a picturesque landscape vista on the left.

Researching Mihr Chand's source proves to be somewhat difficult. While the exact source which he replicated cannot be traced, it is possible to offer a few suggestions. As portrayals of Venus were extremely popular in Renaissance painting, there are various artists including Titian and Giorgione who were captivated by her portrayal. Determining whether there were engravings produced after the Renaissance works in the following centuries is also complicated. While it is unlikely that an original oil painting on the subject of Venus would have appeared in Awadh, there is more of a chance that an engraving or a print published in a book could have been part of one of

the European collections. As Mihr Chand's studies show similarities in compositional format with two works by Titian, namely 'Venus of Urbino' and 'Venus and the Lute Player', the question which must be considered and answered is, was there any seventeenth or eighteenth century prints or engravings that were produced (figure 170)? In the eighteenth century, there was one well-known publisher in London, John Boydell (1719-1804), who would later become Lord Mayor of London, and who produced numerous reproductions of engravings in his numerous publications, including those of the Shakespeare Gallery. In his publications, there was at least one print after Titian of 'Venus' dated to 1781, though there may have been others (figure 171) (Richter 1931, pp, 53-59).

As Mihr Chand's progress was often monitored by Claude Martin during Polier's absences, it is possible that Martin may have been responsible for showing Mihr Chand such studies. Martin's extensive library included volumes on erotica as well as architectural manuals. As Martin frequently ordered books from the Continent, it can be suggested that he may have acquired either publication from Boydell or something very similar which Mihr Chand might have seen. Martin's collection also included volumes on erotica such as *Les Amours de Cupid et Psyche*, *Festival of Love*, *Histoire d'Amour*, and *Histoire Profane* (Llewellyn-Jones 1997, 20).

Looking closely at Mihr Chand's versions, the artist paid particular attention to the woman's naturalistic position, using shading to define her form, and cast shadows underneath her legs. Unfortunately, as seen in Mihr Chand's portraits of Shuja ud-Daula, he continued to struggle with depicting the sitter's naturalistic gaze. As Mihr Chand was more used to profile and three-quarter profile views, Venus' eyes were illustrated on two different levels and produced a lopsided stare.

The topic of courtesans and portraits of women continued to play on Mihr Chand's artistic sensibilities. According to Sven Gahlin, Mihr Chand is the artist of a portrait of an unidentified Indian woman (figure 172).[94] This portrait of the Indian woman is rather peculiar, as the artist depicted a heavy set woman in a flowing bust-length white garment, with a diaphanous *choli* style blouse and *dupatta* draped over her head. This full-length portrait is situated underneath a scalloped archway and is stylistically analogous to the work of Tilly Kettle. From the onset, the style of the carpeting and the Mughal arch in the background reminds the viewer of Kettle's portraits of Shuja ud-Daula. While this work has been attributed to Mihr Chand, the pasty complexion, the mannish physiognomy as well as the scope of her shadows on the

[94] MFA, 2001.136.

carpet is unlike any of Mihr Chand's paintings. In all likelihood, this portrait may have been produced by one of his contemporaries such as Nevasi Lal, as Mihr Chand was not the only artist influenced by Kettle.

The genre of portraiture afforded Mihr Chand many opportunities to challenge the imperial Mughal models. Throughout his career, the artist was extremely conscious of depicting his portraits within a realistic environment and correctly positioned them within space. In a series of portraits of courtesans and women, produced in the later part of his career from 1776-86, the viewer experiences yet another devise coined by Mihr Chand to produce 'realistic' studies of women. In an earlier section of this chapter, it was established that the artist was familiar with the Mughal format of the *jharoka* portrait and readily used this approach to produce portraits of Farrukh Siyar and Zabita Khan (figures 148 and 153). However, by modifying the *jharoka* format, Mihr Chand was able to create exceptional portraits of women that clearly exhibited his awareness of spatial recession and perspective.

Portraits of an unidentified Mughal lady (figure 150) and Zabita Khan (figure 153) offered examples of Mihr Chand's initial approach to *jharoka* portraits. These studies followed the Mughal convention of depicting bust or waist-length profile portraits set within a window frame. In the background, the artist filled the background plane with a solid block of colour. However, in this later period, Mihr Chand realised that, by altering the background plane, he could make a greater visual impact.

While keeping the format of the *jharoka* window with the rolled up curtain above and the panel of fabric draped over the parapet, Mihr Chand realised that he could situate his sitter within a naturalistic environment and create space or the perception of depth beyond the window's opening. To achieve this 'space', Mihr Chand created a second window in the background plane that allowed the viewer to see the distant landscape. By picturing the sitter in profile to the right, the viewer would see the portrait and look through the second window on the left, at an outdoor scene. It was through this second window that Mihr Chand realised he could insert a section of an architectural landmark such as the Taj Mahal or a cropped section of his signature landscape to create the illusion of spatial recession.

By reviewing two of Mihr Chand's portraits, his transformation is revealed. In his portrait of an unidentified Awadhi lady, Mihr Chand used a lattice window frame in the lower part of the second window in order for the viewer to obtain a complete view of the distant landscape (figure 149). As one would expect, Mihr Chand used an aerial perspective to achieve recession within the scene. The second portrait used a similar

compositional format and pictured an 'Awadhi lady smelling a flower', though this time with a distant vista of the Taj Mahal (figure 169). Comparing these two portraits, it becomes clear that Mihr Chand replicated the exact physiognomy of the women and style and compositional format. There were minor differences such as the detailing of clothing, the style of her hair and the distant scene.

The second portrait prompts one to consider the artist's familiarity with Mughal landmarks, the topic that leads us to the following chapter. According to Mihr Chand's composition, he positioned the woman in the Imperial Moonlight Garden, or the Mahtab Bagh, located on the opposite side of the Jamuna River. However, as the Mahtab Bagh originally consisted of a *char-bagh* garden with octagonal pools, there would not have been an actual pavilion or palace in which to situate this woman (figure 174). Thus, Mihr Chand's composition is really a contrived or fantasy image. The next two chapters will discuss Mihr Chand's knowledge and ability to illustrate Mughal landmarks, such as the Taj Mahal, and will also address the issue of there being multiple renditions of these types of *jharoka* portraits of women.

CHAPTER 6

Topographical views, architectural drawings and using perspective

Official surveys conducted by the engineers' corps of the British East India Company, the topographical drawings produced by the French Jesuit priests, as well as the illustrations of the major landmarks produced by amateur draughtsmen during the second half of the eighteenth century would play a pivotal role in establishing topographical studies as an independent genre within Indian art at the cusp of the nineteenth century. Local artists were not only becoming aware of the relevance of these types of studies, they too would experiment with the concept of linear perspective. By the 1820s, local bazaars would be inundated with drawings of popular landmarks such as the Taj Mahal, including the gateway and the cenotaphs, Itimad ud-Daula's tomb in Agra, as well as Delhi monuments including the Diwan-i Khas and the Jami Masjid. Through these illustrations, Agra and Delhi artists were able to demonstrate their ability to work with linear perspective. As a result, the traditional approach, a combination of plan and elevation drawings to represent buildings, was abandoned by local artists. As Mihr Chand's illustrations were produced in the 1770s and 1780s, his contribution needs to be fully examined in order to determine if he was the forerunner of this particular approach. In this chapter, we will review architectural drawings produced in northern India in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, analyse Mihr Chand's topographical drawings, and discuss the wider implication of his work on his contemporaries.

1. Current trends

In the broader context of Indian painting, the rendering of palaces and fortresses had the express purpose of providing the setting rather than being the topic of an illustration. Albeit, in specific instances, such as the scenes from the *Akbarnama* and in court paintings from Mewar, idealised representations of existing structures were integral to the paintings themselves. Considering a double-page composition from the Victoria & Albert Museum's *Akbarnama,* 'A mine explodes in 1567 during the siege of Chitor, killing many of the Mughal forces', it was of the utmost historical necessity to represent the imposing fortress in Rajasthan as it was the scene of the epic battle (figure 175). Aside from the rare instances of idealised buildings, artists would draw on specific architectural features such as pavilions, terraces and *jharoka* windows to create generic

backdrops for *darbar* scenes and portraits. However, by the late eighteenth century, the illustrations produced by artists including Nidha Mal and Mihr Chand demonstrated that there was the need to create these individual studies of each landmark or represent a specific topographical view.

Nidha Mal, an artist of Muhammad Shah's atelier who relocated to Awadh in the 1760s, produced one of the earliest architectural plans of the Red Fort (figure 176). As of today, Nidha Mal's plan, which Falk and Archer (1981) have dated to the 1750s, is the earliest known plan of the Red Fort to be produced by a Mughal artist. Nidha Mal, aside from this work, is best known for large-scale scenes of Muhammad Shah indulging in leisurely activities. Prior to discussing his plan of the Red Fort, it is worthwhile looking at an unfinished study of 'Muhammad Shah in a garden' (figure 177). This study provides an example of Nidha Mal's rendering of trees, placement of objects within the picture plane, and how the artist maximised the space within the composition in order to include the entire picture. In this innovative illustration, Muhammad Shah is pictured astride his horse and situated in the centre of the composition, surrounded by his courtiers. Not only did Nidha Mal present the likeness of the emperor, he was able to provide an accurate representation of the garden, the pavilion in the background, as well as illustrate the procession in the far distance outside the palace walls. The relevance of this illustration is that it present's Nidha Mal's capability to render the pavilion and gateway (on the left) in elevation and his inability to show a sense of three-dimensionality when drawing the niches in the pavilion and the blind arches.

Moving forward, Nidha Mal's plan of the Red Fort indicates a clear shift from his earlier two-dimensional approach. Instead of drawing the façades of the pavilions or audience halls inside the fort, he used a unique combination of plan and elevation to render the plan of the extensive complex; he identified the major gateways including the Lahore Gate, illustrated the gardens, and the Jamuna River. Whilst Nidha Mal provided an overview of the complex, he did not include the layout of the interior.

In viewing this architectural overview, one asks why Nidha Mal created this plan in this particular style. Was this at the bequest of Muhammad Shah, or was another patron requesting this study? Researching similar drawings, we know that local rulers commissioned these types of overviews. In the collection of the Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II, in Jaipur, there is a late eighteenth century plan of the Red Fort (figure 178). This illustration, by a local draughtsman, provided an overview of the plan of the fort with flattened exterior walls (Koch 1997, 143-65). Another example is a map of Agra,

produced in the 1720s, was specially made for the Maharaja of Jaipur (figure 179). This large format painting on cloth, by a Rajasthani artist, used a combination of plans and elevations to render the layout of the city, including the Taj Mahal and the Agra fort which appeared along the Jamuna River (Koch 2006, 23). While the buildings and the city walls were illustrated in this mechanical format, there was no systematic approach to picturing the topographical details such as trees and the hills. In fact, trees were scattered about and placed in a variety of directions.

Comparing these examples with Nidha Mal's plan of the Red Fort offers clarification on two points: that the stylistic approach was pre-existing and that it was not exclusively used by Mughal artists.[95] Furthermore, it can be suggested that Nidha Mal was commissioned either by the emperor or a high ranking official for this overview of the fort; its early date of production therefore eliminates the possibility that it was commissioned by a European officer or merchant.

As previously discussed in Chapter 4, local draughtsmen working for Joseph Tieffenthaler were producing topographical drawings of places such as Lucknow. These illustrations were drawn in a similar style to Nidha Mal's work. The following illustrations produced during the period 1765 to 1766 clearly demonstrate how artists were employing the technique of picturing the two-dimensional façades of buildings drawn in elevation. None of these studies showed evidence of their knowledge of European perspective (figures 180 and 181).

Aside from the studies commissioned by Tieffenthaler, there are two other extraordinary series of architectural drawings produced in this same period. In the Victoria & Albert Museum, there are several maps and architectural drawings of Delhi and local landmarks.[96] Archer (1992, 132) suggests that this group may have been produced by Tieffenthaler's draftsmen under Gentil's direction in 1774. One of the drawings in this group, of the plan of the Red Fort showing the walls and gates (figure 182) is almost identical to Nidha Mal's plan of the same structure (figure 176). This skilfully drawn plan of the fortress included the same overview of the structure without a plan of the interior buildings. Only a minimal amount of paint was used to colour the trees and select portions of the buildings. In comparing these two plans of the Red Fort,

[95] Ascertaining the stylistic precursor or the origins of delineating maps in this precise manner has yet to be confirmed, though visual evidence such as the map of Agra and court paintings from Jodhpur do suggest that it was a stylistic innovation of the early eighteenth century (Crill, Stronge, Topsfield 2004, 278-86).

[96] The other four drawings in this series include views of Dara Shikoh's palace in Agra, street plan of Chandi Chauk, street plan of Delhi showing part of Faiz Bazaar, and a plan of the emperor's garden (Archer 1992, 132; Gole 1988).

it is important to recognise that these were meant to be idealised representations (not accurate plans). This can be realised through noticing that both artists designed the exterior walls into a square-shaped complex, and that the Mussaman Burj pavilion and Lahore Gate were each placed in the centre of opposite walls. This is an important point, as momentarily we will see how Mihr Chand also situated the Mussaman Burj in the exact centre of the east wall, instead of placed off-centre.

The second group of architectural drawings are found in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France; J. M. Lafont (2001) believes that these were commissioned by Gentil and produced by a local architect affiliated to Shuja ud-Daula's court. This series consists of twenty-four drawings of sites in Awadh and Delhi including views of the 'Palace of Nisamoulmoulouk in Delhi on the banks of the Jamuna', 'Palace of the great Moghul in Delhi on the banks of the Jamuna river', 'Fortress of the Nawab Shuja ud-Daula in Faizabad', 'The Tripolia gateway in Faizabad', as well as the 'Palace of Nawab Shuja ud-Daula in Faizabad' (figure 184).[97] The drawings are stylistically different from the previous set. Most noticeably, for each illustration, the artist(s) employed a grid in order to draw each structure with correct proportions. Rather than an overview of each structure, the artist(s) focused on presenting the façades of buildings. Although Lafont (2001) suggests that these were accurate architectural plans, it is more likely that they were meant to be decorative studies than actual plans.

Aside from the previously mentioned illustrations, there are a handful of other early drawings of the Mughal landmarks. The following drawings by Delhi or Agra artists of the Taj Mahal (figure 185) and the Red Fort in Agra (figure 186) are radically different in style. It is clear from looking at these examples, which date to pre-1803, that these artists showed a preference for utilising a bird's eye viewpoint in order to offer a three-dimensional overview of the entire complex, rather than just the façade or the periphery walls. In addition, the landmarks were illustrated within their correct topographical setting. As this set of illustrations are dated to pre-1803, on the basis of the canons perched on the buttresses and the presence of British officers standing in the foreground (Archer 1992, 129), we see a clear shift from the plan and elevation drawings utilised by Nidha Mal and the achievement of these local artists at the cusp of the nineteenth century.

[97] BnF, Department des Estampes et Photographie, Od-63. Each of the drawings in this series is oversized and measure up to a length of 2.5 metres.

Polier's albums include numerous topographical view of Kashmir and drawings of Mughal landmarks, all of which are unsigned. Of these scenes, there is visual evidence that Mihr Chand was behind these studies of the Mughal structures, specifically the Taj Mahal and Red Fort. In the 'Lady Coote' album, there are multiple topographical views and architectural studies.[98] Amongst the twenty-one folios there was a portrait of Shuja ud-Daula, topographical views of the gardens and lakes in Kashmir, multiple passages of poetry, portraits of princes and courtesans, and scenes of dancers performing in pavilions. In addition, the album included a view of the Jami Masjid and the Red Fort in Delhi (figure 187) (figure 188).[99] In the Museum für Indische Kunst, there is an additional Polier album that includes some of the same views as the 'Lady Coote' album.[100] Of the scenes inside the album, there is a view of the Red Fort (figure 189), Jami Masjid (figure 190), as well as a view of the Taj Mahal (figure 191). Aside from these two compilations, individual folios with similar illustrations of the Red Fort and Taj Mahal have been found in public collections.[101]

The multiple copies of the views of the Taj Mahal, Red Fort, and the Jami Masjid are significant. As compared to the architectural drawings that were composed by Tieffenthaler and Gentil's draughtsmen, these show a remarkable achievement in terms of using linear perspective. Although there are various topographical views of the lakes in Kashmir as well as scenes of dancers performing in pavilions in the Polier album, here it is suggested that Mihr Chand drafted and executed these exceptional studies of the Taj Mahal, Red Fort, and the Jami Masjid. Even within this group, not all of the known versions can be attributed to Mihr Chand. It would be with great difficulty

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[98] Achenbach Collection of Graphic Arts, San Francisco, 1982.2.70.10.
The 'Lady Coote' album has a frontispiece or *shamsa* that is inscribed in Persian with the following: 'This book of drawings and specimens of fine penmanship in the art of similitude and expedition together with pieces of *nast'aliq*, *sols*, *shafiaic*, *golzar* and *skekasteh* scripts. This album originally consisted of 21 large format illustrations; each measuring approximately 33 x 48 cm.

[99] According to acquisition records of the Achenbach Collection for Graphic Art, this album was dispersed in the 1980s. The view of the Jami Masjid as well as two folios of calligraphy are now found in the collection of the Sackler Museum at Harvard University.

[100] MIK I 5005. Unfortunately, the frontispiece was not inscribed. This album consists of 16 single sided folios, each measuring approximately 31 x 44 cm.

[101] Aside from the loose versions of the Red Fort and Taj Mahal, there are copies of the other scenes from the Lady Coote album and the Berlin album that can be found in various public collections.

to substantiate Mihr Chand's hand on the remaining works, including the views of Kashmir, though many of them show the influence of the artist himself.[102]

Mihr Chand's illustrations of the landmarks are of immense art historical value. His understanding and application of single point perspective (linear) deviated from the contemporary approach, which was limited to plan and elevation drawings. As Polier's letters do not shed any information on these unique paintings, nor do the inscriptions below some of these works, one must question what sources influenced Mihr Chand to produce these avant-garde studies. As the artist had access to Polier's residence and collection, it is possible that he discovered examples in Polier's library. As Polier was employed by the East India Company as an engineer and architect, it is very likely that his personal collection included his own drawings of Calcutta and Fort William. Another source would have been Claude Martin. As Martin visited Mihr Chand during Polier's absence from Faizabad, in order to monitor his work, it is probable that Martin provided Mihr Chand with a variety of models. According to David (2006, 204), Martin's extensive library consisted of the following volumes: *Masons and Bricklayers etc. Consisting of Designs in Architecture in Every Style and Taste* (1774) and *Bucks Antiquities, or Venerable remains of above four hundred Castles, Monasteries, Palaces, etc. in England and Wales, with one Hundred Views of Cities and Chief Towns* (1774) by Samuel and Nathaniel Buck. In addition, there is also the distinct possibility that Mihr Chand may have composed these studies *in situ*, during his journey from Faizabad to Delhi in 1776, or while he was stationed in Delhi.

In one of Polier's album, Mihr Chand provides one vital clue to this puzzle. His signed work, 'Garden scene' demonstrates his proficiency with the use of a naturalistic viewpoint and single-point perspective. In this unique introspective study of a garden, Mihr Chand used a naturalistic viewpoint (rather than a bird's eye overview) to look into the garden filled with schematically planned flowerbeds, pavilions, waterways and fountains (figure 105). Presented through a decorated frame (similar to a picture frame), Mihr Chand used single-point perspective (though from a slightly elevated viewpoint) to achieve the spatial recession and focal point of the image of the distant water tank and landscape beyond. Thus, looking through the 'window', the viewer would be led beyond the *charbutra* (raised dais) with a *shamiyana* (canopy) and follow the channel of water to the horizon. Using a mirror image of geometrically aligned flowerbeds, trees, and white marble walls along the central waterway, the artist was able to achieve his

[102] These illustrations, found in the Lady Coote Album and MAK, I 5005 album are all unsigned works.

centralised viewpoint. This use of geometrical lines was not part of the Mughal repertoire. It was very likely that Mihr Chand was assisted through western examples or possibly through the guidance of an adept draughtsman. As this illustration exhibits Mihr Chand's awareness of these newly learned techniques, it provides the basis to understand and accept that the architectural drawings of the Mughal monuments should be attributed to Mihr Chand as well.

To begin with, we will first look at the views of the Red Fort in Delhi. In researching architectural plans, four almost identical illustrations of the Red Fort have been found in public collections. The Red Fort, also known as Shahjahanabad, was built during the years 1639-48 for the emperor Shah Jahan. 'The plan is based on a giant *mutham baghdadi,* which here takes the form of a rectangle with chamfered corners. The pavilions and halls for the emperor and the *zenana* stand on terraces threaded along a canal that runs along the river bank' (Koch 1997, 153). This magnificent edifice was the home to the Mughal emperor and the centre of Mughal politics from the seventeenth through the mid-nineteenth century.

To illustrate the Red Fort, Mihr Chand combined the Persian convention of a bird's eye viewpoint with single point perspective as seen in figure 189. As a result, the artist was able to convey both the interior and exterior of the complex. In his illustration, the artist pictured the eastern wall of the complex drawn in elevation and provided a bird's eye perspective into the interior. Inside, the artist drew multiple courtyards, gardens, pavilions, and audience halls dotted with miniature-size attendants, officers, and what appears to be the emperor himself. However, Mihr Chand's depiction of the fort was not consistent with the actual design. Drawing the eastern wall, Mihr Chand situated the Mussaman Burj, a domed pavilion, precisely in the middle of the wall with the Rang Mahal immediately behind, instead of offsetting the pavilion to the right as seen in the architectural plan below. The artist's decision to centre the pavilion can be read as his intention to show the continuance of the centralised viewpoint and a way to create a harmonious and symmetrical view. Even so, when comparing his design with the work of the unknown draughtsman working for Gentil as well as Nidha Mal, we discover that artists collectively assumed that the Mussaman Burj was situated in the middle of the wall (figure 176).

In drawing the exterior walls of the Red Fort, Mihr Chand opted to format the overall structure as a pure rectangle instead of a 'rectangle with chamfered corners' (Koch 1997, 153). Mihr Chand's was not the only artist who was unable to correctly delineate the overall structure; Nidha Mal and Gentil's draughtsmen presented the

exterior walls in a square formation. Mihr Chand's emphasis on aesthetics over realistic representation is important to understand, as art historians have glossed over this concept in discussing these large-scale architectural drawings (Gadesbusch 2002).

Looking at the four illustrations of the Red Fort, only one version can be attributed to Mihr Chand. The other three versions are not of the same high quality and the figures are modelled slightly differently. It is likely that Mihr Chand's studio copied his original and executed the copies. The Berlin version, here attributed to Mihr Chand, (figure 189) is a sensitive depiction of the Mughal stronghold. On the eastern wall, on the terrace between the Mussaman Burj and the Diwan-i Khas, he pictured Shah Alam II surrounded by his courtiers. There are certain stylistic markers that assist in identifying Mihr Chand's hand. Situating his light source from the left, the artist was able to illustrate his adeptness with shadowing, as is visible within the blind arches of the fort's exterior wall and delicately cast from the upper level of the Rang Mahal courtyard down to the garden. Even the tiny figures on the terrace have their appropriate shadows. Although the focal point is the fort itself, Mihr Chand did not neglect the outer areas. He completed the scene by adding the surrounding buildings, including a miniature Jami Masjid in the upper left corner. In comparison, the other three versions do not include these fine details.

The San Francisco (figure 188) and the British Library (figure 192) versions are rather indistinguishable. Similar to the Toronto copy, the artist did not provide the surrounding landscape. The interior of the building included a compacted layout. Although this artist included a detailed depiction of the gardens and the figures in the courtyard as well as on the terrace, there was no attempt to model the figures or to cast shadows. At this stage in Mihr Chand's career, he would have paid attention to the details.

The Toronto version (figure 193), although compositionally similar, is somewhat lacklustre. The colour palette is completely different. The interior plan of the building is simplified and there are only a few visible figures in the scene. In addition, the artist did not include any of the surrounding landscape.

Mihr Chand's view of the Red Fort can be compared to an existing illustration produced in the late eighteenth century (figure 194). In the period 1776 to 1779, a Frenchman by the name of Deshaies de Montigny produced a view of the façade of the east wall of the fort (Lafont 2000, 130). In all likelihood, it was composed *in situ* if one were sitting across the Jamuna River. Montigny's version is worth mentioning as he selected to illustrate the elevation and façade of the structure, from a naturalistic

viewpoint; however, he did not include a view of the inside of the complex. More importantly, there is a perplexing similarity between their approaches; both artists opted to situate the Mussaman Burj pavilion in the middle of the eastern wall. Could it have been possible that these two artists crossed paths in Delhi?

Mihr Chand is also responsible for portraying the Jami Masjid. Of the two existing versions, one in Berlin (figure 190) and the second at Harvard University (figure 187), Mihr Chand can be linked only to the Berlin version. The Jami Masjid, a Mughal mosque erected during the reign of Shah Jahan, is located to the south west of the Red Fort. In his illustration of the mosque, he opted to use the combination of the bird's eye overview combined with single point perspective (figure 190). By using the overview, Mihr Chand allowed for the viewer to experience a visit to the mosque as if they were walking up the steps, through the elaborate *pishtaq* style entrance and into the main courtyard. The viewer was also able to look into the structure and see the central fountain, the façade, and interior of the main prayer hall. In terms of compositional format, the Berlin and Harvard versions are similar. However, there are two main differences. The Berlin copy (figure 190) included the surrounding environment and city life, so that the mosque was correctly situated within the Delhi map. The second difference is that Mihr Chand precisely drew the proportions of the edifice, including the minarets, so that it would fit within the picture plane. In the Harvard version (figure 197), it is clear that the unidentified artist struggled with the proportions of the minaret and was unable to keep within the borders of the folio. As a result, the black border cropped the top of each minaret.

Aside from the Delhi monuments, Mihr Chand illustrated the Taj Mahal in Agra. The Taj Mahal is a magnificent edifice that was commissioned by Emperor Shah Jahan during the years 1631-43 in memory of his beloved wife. This startling funerary monument, composed of white marble, was erected along the Jamuna River. In visiting the city of Agra, Mihr Chand would have had the opportunity to visit this awe-inspiring monument. Positioning himself from across the river, the artist could focus on the architectural design of the edifice as well as the two complementary red sandstone buildings on either side. Rather than using the bird's eye viewpoint, which would allow for an overview of the entire funerary complex, Mihr Chand radically shifted his approach by drawing the components from a naturalistic, eye-level viewpoint.

There are two known versions of the Taj Mahal that we can attribute to Mihr Chand (figures 191 and 195). These illustrations pictured the flowing river, high sandstone bastions and brick walls, and the white domed tomb with minarets positioned

at the four corners. This structure 'is flanked by two identical monuments of red sandstone inlaid with marble, of which the [right] one is a mosque, the other being its architectural replica referred to as a *javab,* or an answer to an echo, whose only purpose is to balance the symmetry' (Dehejia 1997, 324). Using single point, linear perspective correctly, the artist was able present the entire complex realistically as if he was drawing the scene *in situ.*

Of Mihr Chand's architectural studies, his illustrations of the Taj Mahal are praiseworthy and require our undivided attention. It is very likely, that these works are the earliest examples by an Indian artist to correctly apply single-point perspective. In researching drawings by local artists, there is one example that is strikingly similar to Mihr Chand's study. In the archives of Monsieur Montigny, there is one example of the Taj Mahal drawn from the same viewpoint (figure 196). Although this example substantiates that single-point perspective was used by local artists, there is a watermark on the paper with the date of 1797 (Lafont 2000, 130-31); Montigny's version was produced at least ten years after Mihr Chand passed through Agra.

The illustrations in Polier's albums undoubtedly require further investigation. Nonetheless, the individual paintings offer a great deal of information on Mihr Chand's style as well as could shed light on some of his contemporaries. Amongst the known Polier albums and loose folios, three different versions of an illustration entitled 'Acrobats on a terrace' (figure 197) are found. According to J. Bautze (1998, 252-53), the copy in Dr. Ehrenfeld's collection should be attributed to the circle of Faizullah.[103] Faizullah's style and paintings were briefly mentioned in Chapter 2. He often produced fantastic views of palaces and gardens and had an overwhelming preference for drawing intricate architectural studies utilised multiple horizon points combined with a centralised perspective (figures 66 and 67). As Bautze believes this to be a work by the school of Faizullah, one asks whether this scene, which only has one horizon and a centralised perspective, could be the product of Mihr Chand's studio instead. Aside from this distinction, the use of the lattice or *jali* frame resonates with the work of Mihr Chand, as seen in his 'Garden scene' (figure 105) and in the study of a 'Lady resting a *tambura* on her shoulder' which I have here attributed to the artist (figure 198).

Faizullah was not the only Awadhi artist to employ centralised viewpoints and create these lavish terrace scenes. Mir Kalan Khan's '*Holi* in the Sheesh Mahal of Nawab Wazir Asaf ud-Daula' (figure 62) is also important, as it may have also inspired

[103] This painting is inscribed: 'assembly of women during a performance of tightrope acrobats in the beautiful buildings of Dilkusha' (Bautze 1998, 252).

Mihr Chand's own renderings of the 'Garden scene' (figure 105) and the views of the Mughal landmarks discussed above. At first glance, Khan's scene seems to be rather inharmonious, almost as if the original composition was trimmed on the right side. Here, Khan set the stage by drawing pavilions on either end of the terrace. Beyond the terrace, he devised a secondary scene of an enclosed lake with a distant pavilion in the background. However, Khan's painting demonstrates his lack of skill in using the centralised viewpoint. Instead of the scene receding into the distance, the viewpoint was altered and the viewer's eyes are directed upwards. On the terrace, Asaf ud-Daula and his ladies celebrated *Holi*; above, Khan intended that the women in the pavilions should have been viewing the scene below. However, Khan's placement of women renders them in a peculiar manner. The woman seated on the left rooftop, appears to be ready to plunge down below. As Mihr Chand and Mir Kalan Khan's illustrations were produced approximately in the same period (during the reign of Asaf ud-Daula), one questions if these two artists collaborated or directly influenced one another. In the following chapter, this connection will be further explored.

CHAPTER 7

The question of originality

After reviewing Mihr Chand's paintings in the last few chapters, we must determine if any of his paintings should be defined as original or cutting edge. In terms of style, his paintings exhibit his ability to implement a variety of idioms and techniques. His knowledge of the trends in Mughal portraiture, awareness of the regional painting styles, and his inclusion of western techniques in his paintings, places Mihr Chand in a class above his contemporaries. Nonetheless, in reviewing these paintings collectively, after extensive observation and research, it is evident that not all his paintings were original. In fact, the majority of his works were either reproductions of earlier paintings that he discovered in Awadh, his interpretations of European portraits and in many cases duplicate or multiple copies of the same compositions. Thus, I question the artist's motivation and if wonder if any of his works show a degree of originality. Finally, I ask, how can his paintings be interpreted within the broader framework of Awadhi painting? As there is no comprehensive framework on the Awadhi tradition, it becomes extremely difficult to compare Mihr Chand's actions with the work of his contemporaries. In this chapter, I will re-examine Mihr Chand's paintings in the context of originality and the artist's motivation to produce multiple copies of several of these works.

1. Disclosing Mihr Chand's source for his paintings in the Polier albums

To determine the paintings and ideas that inspired Mihr Chand's own works, the first step would be to review Polier's original collection of miniature paintings for any evidence. In Berlin, between the Museum für Islamische Kunst and Museum für Indische Kunst, there are eight complete albums that were produced for Antoine Polier during his residence in Awadh and Delhi between 1773 and 1786.[104] These albums (except MIK I 5005 which contains a set of large format architectural drawings) contain approximately 40 double-sided folios. Aside from holding the majority of known works ascribed to the artist, it contained countless examples of early and late Mughal, Deccani, and Safavid examples. The variety of paintings collected by Polier would have provided Mihr Chand with an endless source of inspiration to create his own masterpieces.

[104] See Appendix IV.

Aside from the Polier albums in Berlin, it was necessary to locate additional albums containing Awadhi paintings as well as individual works produced in the region. As Gentil was well acquainted with Polier, it would make sense to review his collection, now in the Bibliothèque Nationale. Regrettably, there were no paintings to be found that were ascribed to Mihr Chand or works that were produced in his style. Nonetheless, Gentil's collection did yield a major discovery. Aside commissioning Awadhi artists, Gentil collected several albums of Indian paintings. By reviewing one specific album containing Mughal and Persian paintings, it was revealed that Mihr Chand directly copied six paintings from this album and later incorporated his new versions in albums belonging to Antoine Polier. The table below provides details of the six sets of paintings.

Table 1. Comparison of the paintings copied by Mihr Chand from the Gentil collection

Gentil album, Bnf	Image (cm)	Polier albums in Berlin	Image (cm)
Portrait of Shayasteh Khan Illiyas Khan, c. 1660. BnF Res Od.43 Pet fol. 26	30.4 x 21.5	Portrait of Shayasteh Khan Mihr Chand, c. 1765-73 MIK I 4594 fol. 21v	29.5 x. 21.2
'Female musician holding a tambura' Mughal, late 17th century BnF Res Od.43 Pet fol. 6	19.4 x 11.2	'Female musician holding a tambura' Mihr Chand, c. 1765-73 MIK I 4595 fol. 2r	28.1 x 14.9
A prince meeting Sheikh Shir Muhammad Kawwal'' Mughal, 17th century BnF Res Od.43 Pet fol. 24	25.2 x 20.5	'A prince meeting Sheikh Shir Muhammad Kawwal' Mihr Chand, c. 1765-73 MIK I 4566 fol. 29r	32.1 x 20.1
'A sheikh sitting under a tree with an ascetic and musicians' Mughal, mid-17th century BnF Res Od.43 Pet. fol. 2	24 x 17	'A sheikh sitting under a tree with an ascetic and musicians' Mihr Chand, c. 1765-73 MIK I 4594 fol. 28r	23.4 x. 16.5
'Zal summoning the simurgh to help Rustam by burning a feather on a brazier' Mughal, early 17th century BnF Res Od.43 Pet fol. 30	26.9 x 17.9	'Zal summoning the simurgh to help Rustam by burning a feather on a brazier' Mihr Chand, c. 1765-73 MIK I 4596 fol. 6r	27. 8 x 17.6
Maharaja Jai Singh of Amber Jodhpur or Nagaur school, c. 1719-50s BnF Res Od.43 Pet fol. 8	27.8 x 19.9	Maharaja Jai Singh of Amber Mihr Chand, c. 1765-73 MIK I 4599 fol. 7v	33.5 x 21.7

Kühnel (1922, Lafont 2000, 119) originally noted the similarity between Mihr Chand's portrait of Shayasteh Khan (figure 85) and Illiyas Khan's portrait of Shayasteh Khan, from the Gentil album in Paris (figure 86).[105] Aside from Kühnel, no other scholar published any other connection between the individual paintings in Polier and Gentil's collections. This unawareness may have resulted due to the fact that both collections have not been fully published. Adding to this issue, is that Martin (1912) and Blochet (1900, 1920, 1926) in publishing some of the individual paintings, may not have accurately identified paintings, consistently listed provenance details, or even noted the present location of the art works. Without a first hand examination of both collections in Berlin and Paris, it would be impossible to construe this link by relying on previously published material alone.

In a span of twelve years, from 1763 to 1775, Gentil employed the artists Nevasi Lal and Mohan Singh. Gentil's memoirs, personal records, as well as handwritten notes on albums that he acquired or commissioned, did not mention the names of any other artists. Although there is no written evidence substantiating Mihr Chand connection to Gentil, his copies of these paintings does establish the fact that he did obtain extended access to Gentil's collection. Whilst it is difficult to provide an accurate date of production for each of these works, I suggest that Mihr Chand produced his versions during the years 1765 to 1773. This time frame is deduced from the fact that Mihr Chand settled in Faizabad by 1765 and that he must have completed this project before undertaking employment with Polier in 1773. Furthermore, Mihr Chand needed to finish these paintings before Gentil departed from Faizabad in the winter of 1774-75.

In theory, it is possible to only suggest a few reasons why Mihr Chand produced these copies. He may have replicated these paintings in order to increase his own stock, which could be later sold to another collector. Another option may have been that Gentil asked Mihr Chand to copy these works, though this theory cannot be substantiated as Gentil did not keep any works by Mihr Chand, nor did he ever mention the artist in his memoirs or papers. Another potential explanation is that Polier wanted exact copies of Gentil's miniatures and commissioned the artist to produce these. However, the question arises would Mihr Chand been able to duplicate these six works as well as produce multiple portraits of Shuja ud-Daula within his first year of employment with Polier from 1773-74?

[105] Kuhnel's successors (Anand and Goetz, 1967) would refer to his findings in subsequent publications of this portrait.

Mihr Chand's decision should not be regarded adversely; his methodology should be viewed in light of the long established practice of copying within the Mughal tradition. Replicating iconographies and imagery was viewed as an acceptable teaching method and the *modus operandi* (Del Bonta 2002, 151). In fact, copybooks as well as tracings were readily available for students to practise their skills. Artists would broaden knowledge of the idiom and become more adept at recognising the correct physiognomy of the Mughal rulers. Portraits by artists such as Manohar and Basawan would provide the new generation with the correct models to follow. Artists also relied on tracings and sketches for the correct iconography in recreating illustrations to literary texts and *ragamala* paintings.

Looking at Mihr Chand's copies, the question arises did he rely on tracings or copy the composition by free hand? To make a tracing, Mihr Chand would need a fine sheet of animal skin to use as tracing paper, which would be placed over the original image. He would then sketch the outlines. Next, he would punch fine holes along the outlines and dust carbon powder delicately over the page. After lifting the tracing, the outlines of the original image would come through and the artist could finish the preliminary sketch. Through comparing the originals with the copies, it is clear that the details were systematically transferred; Mihr Chand must have relied on tracings rather than recreating the composition by free hand. In addition, it would have been essential to complete the new versions alongside the originals for consistency of the colour palette and in the fine details.

In regards to Mihr Chand's use of tracings or sketches, there is a letter from Polier which needs to be considered. Polier briefly mentioned (2001, fol. 256b) that he was interested in keeping the sketches or drafts that he acquired. He expressed that the artist was required to 'complete' or 'finish' these works, but to keep the original sketches and paste them on the reverse of the new versions. While Polier's instructions were clear in his letters, there is no evidence that Mihr Chand's followed them precisely or that he included the drafts in any of Polier's known albums.

Revisiting the question of the artist's intent, Gentil's personal inventory of paintings offers a clue.[106] This handwritten inventory, consisting of less than ten pages, was entitled '*Dessin et Cartes de M. le Gentil*'. It is assumed that Gentil prepared this list prior to returning to France. Inside, he listed the contents of each album. On one of the final pages, Gentil included a list entitled *'dessins indien non valable'* (Indian drawings which were not valuable). It must be questioned, what did Gentil define as

[106] BnF, Departement des Reserves, Ye 62

'not valuable'? Were there financial implications involved? Or was it based on his understanding and connoisseurship of Indian art? Nonetheless, I suggest that it was Gentil's classification of these works that made it possible for Mihr Chand to experiment with two of the paintings from this collection. One of these works, entitled by Gentil as '*Simourge ou phenix indien fabulux*', had rather garish yellow margins with blue floral designs (figure 88). Through the aid of a tracing, Mihr Chand recreated an exact copy of the scene from the *Shahnameh* of 'Zal summoning the simurgh to help Rustam by burning a feather on a brazier' (figure 87). Mihr Chand's version demonstrates that he attentively copied every detail in the painting, including the barely discernible animals hidden in the landscape. He also matched the colour palette with shrewd precision. The second work from this list was a portrait of Shayasteh Khan entitled by Gentil as '*Signeur patna à cheval arme d'une lance*' (figure 86). This portrait is ascribed to the artist Illiyas Khan and has been dated to circa 1660. Illiyas Khan used the technique of *nim qalam* to produce his illustration (figure 85); though sections of the painting were lightly coloured in. Comparing these two works, it is apparent that Mihr Chand kept in line with the *nim qalam* style. In addition, he applied a slightly heavier application of paint to highlight the clothing and the details of the general's weapons. It is possible that Gentil may have assumed that the *nim qalam* illustration was 'not valuable' and wrongly assumed that it was not completely 'finished'.

From Gentil's album, there are an additional four paintings that were copied by Mihr Chand. In these following examples, we will see how Mihr Chand appropriated the main picture and altered the setting in order redefine the spatial conventions. The study of a 'Female musician holding a *tambura*' demonstrates a relatively straightforward approach adopted by Mihr Chand to alter the overall compositional format of this work. Both the original (figure 92) and Mihr Chand's version (figure 91) portrayed a woman standing in profile. She is pictured holding the base of a musical instrument, most likely a *tambura*, in her hands with its body propped up against her chest and shoulder. The original work is reflective of the Mughal style of the Dara Shikoh period. The woman appears floating against a generic landscape, with her feet not touching the ground. Mihr Chand's alterations included supplanting her feet firmly on the ground and changing the landscape setting. He added foliage and rocks to the shallow foreground, inserted a defined horizon point with a range of mountains in the distance, and filled the background with a pale blue sky. As a result, by inserting these features and using an aerial perspective, he was able to achieve spatial recession and situate the musician within a naturalistic outdoor setting. A final note, Mihr Chand's

version demonstrated how he could simply transform a late seventeenth century example into a late eighteenth century painting that would have appealed to the local market.

Mihr Chand's applied this same approach, of altering the setting, to a contemporary portrait of Maharaja Jai Singh of Amber (r. 1699-1743). In Polier's album, entitled *Volume Septième*, we find this incongruous portrait of a prince or ruler from the Amber court (figure 89) that is attributed here to Mihr Chand. In Awadh, it would have been exceedingly rare to find examples of Jodhpur paintings. Thus Mihr Chand's decision to work on this portrait is noteworthy. It must be briefly mentioned, that within the Mughal tradition, it was not uncommon for artists to portray Rajput leaders; in fact, Akbar commissioned these portraits himself. However, during the eighteenth century when relationships between the provincial Mughal courts and Rajasthan were not that cordial, it would have been uncommon for Mihr Chand or his contemporaries to produce portraits of the Rajput rulers.

The original equestrian portrait of Maharaja Jai Singh of Amber, identified as 'Raja Jai Singh on a horse' by Gentil on the margin, followed the Jodhpur or possibly Nagaur school idiom that is characterised by 'boldness of line' and flat contours (figure 90) (Crill 2000, 60). The original painting pictured the ageing ruler on horseback, smoking from a hookah, and accompanied by two attendants on either side of the horse against an abstract landscape. The landscape was created by filling the background of the painting with a solid expanse of bright green, with striations of brown along the bottom to indicate the ground, only leaving a small band across the top to be painted with a bright blue sky and white clouds. The artist used pronounced red lines to outline individuals and a heavy application of colour along the folds of clothing. Through the aid of a tracing, Mihr Chand preserved the group portrait and transposed them into an Awadhi landscape.

In preparing his version, Mihr Chand used a larger folio so that he could expand the picture plane to accommodate for his landscape additions, as well as to prevent overcrowding within the scene. In the background, Mihr Chand added a low horizon point and, by using the technique of aerial perspective, he achieved a sense of recession. This landscape vista was dotted with his signature style miniature trees. In the foreground, Mihr Chand painted small bushes and plants that were kept in proportion to the Maharaja and his companions. To complete the picture, Mihr Chand's expanded the picture plane so that there was room for a wide blue sky filled with his signature clouds.

Although Mihr Chand's alteration to the landscape setting is clearly visible, he only made minor changes to the group portrait. As mentioned, the original work included visible red outlines and used a heavier approach to modelling folds in the clothing. While Mihr Chand continued the rigid, two-dimensional approach to illustrating the costumes worn by the attendants, he omitted the harsh outlines and changed the shade of pink to a softer tone in order to create a more harmonious composition.

Mihr Chand's dexterity with the Rajput idiom is apparent in his duplication of the portrait of the elderly Maharaja with his attendants. Nonetheless, the overall pastiche quality created through the collaboration of two different idioms prompts one to question the artist's choice. Although Mihr Chand desired to have a naturalistic representation of space, he compromised the overall quality and depiction of the Jodhpur ruler. In a sense, he transplanted Jai Singh from Rajasthan and supplanted him into an Awadhi landscape. Mihr Chand's versatility and interest in different idioms outside the Mughal tradition demonstrates his open-minded nature and willingness to experiment with new concepts. Though for the most part, the artist showed preference for the Mughal style.

Mihr Chand's version of 'A sheikh sitting under a tree with an ascetic and musicians' (figure 95) was directly copied from a mid-seventeenth century miniature found in Gentil's collection (figure 96). This painting entitled by Gentil as *'Visite à un pirzabad'* pictured the interaction between a mullah, a mediating archer, two musicians and a servant wearing a Mongol style cap sitting underneath a mango tree. In the original painting, there was a second scene in the upper half of the folio that illustrated a local woman seated on the ledge of a straw hut with a spinning wheel. In replicating this painting, Mihr Chand was only concerned with the primary scene picturing the group seated underneath the tree, which he transferred into a new composition complete with his eighteenth century Awadhi landscape setting.

Copying the imagery, Mihr Chand paid attention to detail and opted to follow the mid-seventeenth century colour palette. From left to right, Mihr Chand precisely painted the flute player who kneels on the ground and plays the flute with his cheeks puffed with air. He painted the flautist's *jama* with white and brown stripes that was lined in a brilliant green, which is barely visible in the cuffs of his shirtsleeves, a gold and orange scarf over his shoulder, and a white turban. Directly behind the flautist, the guitarist is positioned kneeling in profile, with his body facing the right, and dressed in a vermilion *jama* with a purple and gold turban. Standing to the left of the musicians, a

horse emerges into the scene, although only his head and slight section of his body is visible. The horse's bridle decoration is the most ornate aspect of the painting, unlike in the original work. In centre, the heavily bearded archer sits upright with his knees pressed into his chest, which are tied together with a meditation band. He wears a simple white *jama* and green and purple striped trousers. Looking closely at his hands, he wears an emerald ring on his thumb and holds an arrow in his right hand. On the ground, directly in front of the archer, are several arrows and a bow. Although the viewer may assume that the meditating devotee dressed in white is the intended focal point, the main figure is in fact the *mullah* in yellow robes, with the downcast head. Seated to his left, is a servant or possibly a missionary attired in a sheepskin wrap and vermillion trousers. On this man's waistband, there is a gold dagger and brown pouch on which Mihr Chand discreetly signed his name. The final clue to this man's identity is the four black bracelets or bands on his arm.

In recreating this exquisite painting, Mihr Chand elaborated on the individual landscape features in both the foreground and background. In restructuring the layout of his version, Mihr Chand divided the scene into four distinct sections in order to create the illusion of spatial recession (which was devoid in the original). In the lower foreground, Mihr Chand inserted an expanse of grass dotted with plants and rocks that lead up to the earthen mound where the group is seated. The distinctive space for the group setting separates the scene into two halves. The leafy green tree laden with ripe mangoes also forces the viewer to look towards the left into the distance. As the landscape dips down and extends towards the silvery lake, we see that Mihr Chand adapted and tried to preserve many of the original features.

The newly devised background by Mihr Chand is of interest, as the artist omitted the original scene of a woman sitting on the ledge of an open thatched hut with a spinning wheel. Instead, the artist selected an eighteenth century urbanised landscape vista, almost similar in style to the landscapes of the previous paintings. Embellishing the background, he added an agrarian scene complete with grazing cows, horses, and a herder with the architectural features of an urbanised development including a mosque, a Hindu temple, and residential buildings. Some of these buildings, including the mosque and temple, were painted in a brilliant white using a skewered perspective. By introducing this complex of religious and residential buildings, the artist's decision to align each structure differently, demonstrated that he had not fully grasped the technique of perspective by this time.

Mihr Chand's portrait of Maharaja Jai Singh of Amber (figure 89) and 'A sheikh sitting under a tree with an ascetic and musicians' (figure 95) clearly demonstrated his desire to reconstruct the background landscape and objects in order to correctly situate figures within a realistic representation of space. The artist's next work takes a different direction. Titled by Gentil as *'Un prince et un sheikh assis sur une terrasse,'* this scene pictured a gathering of a *mullah*, a meditating devotee wearing simple white clothing with his knees bound to his chest with a meditation band, with two younger princes seated on either side of the *mullah* (figure 94). In the background, an attendant stands holding a *morchal* or flywhisk of peacock feathers behind the mediating devotee, who is possibly a ruler. By comparing the two versions, it is clear that Mihr Chand version, as seen in figure 93, re-aligned objects and features in order to achieve a centralised viewpoint.

In researching the subject of the painting, it has been possible to determine the identify of the *mullah* dressed in flowing white and blue robes as Sheikh Shir Muhammad Kawwal, a famous seventeenth century mullah. In fact, the seventeenth century version appropriated the visage and physiognomy of the *mullah* from the work of the artist Muhammad Nadir Samarqandi (fl. 1627-58) as seen in a miniature with individual portraits of Shir Muhammad, Khan Azam, and Jahangir (figure 199). This re-use of iconography from an older painting emphasises how artists of the Mughal tradition were constantly looking back at the work of the predecessors and how the appropriation of imagery was widespread. Unfortunately, identities of the remaining sitters cannot be determined.

Replicating the original group seated on a terrace, Mihr Chand systematically copied each of the individual portraits. In the original scene, Kawwal was depicted in three-quarter profile and facing the mediating devotee who was illustrated in profile (figure 94). The remaining princes and attendants were all drawn in profile; the two next to Kawwal are positioned facing the viewer's right and the other two facing the viewer's left. These men were not situated on the same level and do not display any rapport between them. On the floor, there were various objects laid out including an instrument, a tea service, bolsters and cushions, and other decorative items.

Mihr Chand had concerns with the original composition, as he realised that the original did not convey a sense of depth, or recession into the background, or even a centralised viewpoint. Perhaps the artist felt that the seventeenth century original diverted the viewer's gaze towards the *mullah* and not to the interaction between the *mullah* and the devotee. To remedy this problem, the artist transformed two sections of

the composition (figure 93). First, he increased the foreground space and added a set of steps leading to the terrace, a small garden, and a balustrade. Through these few technical alterations, Mihr Chand was able to increase distance between the viewer and the scene. Secondly, the artist altered the alignment and shape of the fountain in order to create a centralised viewpoint that focused on the conversation between the two main figures. His last adjustment was to shift the young prince, who had been originally fixed on the lower edge of the terrace, up towards the middle of the terrace, as it seemed as though he would have surely fallen off the terrace in his previous position. Finally, a sure indication that this was in fact the hand of Mihr Chand and not a seventeenth century work, the artist cast shadows from each of the individual figures

Aside from copying from Gentil's collection, Mihr Chand is linked to an additional two paintings that can be traced back to the original source. One of these works in an early seventeenth century painting entitled 'Dervish receiving a visitor' (figure 200). Mihr Chand's copy was placed into one of Polier's albums (figure 201). As compared to the previously mentioned copies by Mihr Chand, this pair has been published (Zebrowski 1983, 78-79). Unlike his copies of miniatures from the Gentil collection, it is exceedingly difficult to date Mihr Chand's version of this Bijapur painting. Only limited information is known regarding the painting's provenance; the entrepreneur Sir Gore Ouseley (1770-1844) acquired the Bijapur version during his visit to Lucknow in the period 1795-96. He may have obtained this painting from the collection of either Asaf ud-Daula or Claude Martin (Harris 2002, 394).

'Dervish receiving a visitor' portrays a visit by two men to the Sufi mystic Badi' al- Din Madar, commonly referred to as Shah Madar. This mystic was born in Aleppo in 1051 AD; he was of the *silsilah* of 'Abd al-Qadir Jilani and according to popular culture he flourished in India for more than five centuries. In Makanpur, near Lucknow, Sultan Ibrahim Sharki erected a tomb in the fifteenth century to commemorate Shah Madar. Shah Madar's popularity with local residents would have been reason enough for Mihr Chand to recreate the illustration.

Portrayals of Shah Madar were common amongst both later Mughal artists in Delhi and Awadh. Aside from Mihr Chand's scene, Mir Kalan Khan has been attributed for two separate nocturnal scenes of Shah Madar receiving visitors (Akimushkin 1996, plate 16), though these were produced during the period 1730-1740. While Mir Kalan Khan's studies follow the Mughal style, Mihr Chand's decision to replicate the Bijapuri idiom is noteworthy. Both his paintings of Shah Madar and the portrait of Maharaja Jai Singh of Amber (figure 87) reveal his keen interest in experimenting with a range of

styles. Nonetheless, in Awadh during the 1760s and 1770s, Mir Kalan Khan also exhibited a fascination with the Bijapuri idiom. His scene of 'A princess watching a maid killing a snake at night', (figure 65) is one example that shows his versatile skill. It is very likely that examples of Bijapur paintings were brought to Awadh by European officers who had served in the Deccan. Although Polier's collection did not include the original study of Shah Madar, he did obtained several other important works by Bijapur artists (Enderlein and Hickmann 1979).

Comparing the two studies of Shah Madar, the quality of Mihr Chand's version indicates that he spent an extended period of time reviewing the original. With the original 'Bodleian' painter's version suffering paint loss, it may have been Mihr Chand's intention to reproduce a fresh copy of the masterpiece. There is also the possibility that the original may have sustained damage and subsequent paint loss at a much later date. It can only be suggested that Mihr Chand discovered or came across this work either through his employment with Polier or through the collections of another resident in Faizabad. In comparing the two paintings, it becomes clear that Mihr Chand opted for the bolder colours of the eighteenth century palette and brightened the composition by using various shades of browns mixed with orange to highlight the group, brick platform, and the skin tone of the figures. In the original, the 'Bodleian painter' selected a monochromatic scheme of browns and greys, which Zebrowski (1983, 78) stated that the 'sombre tones of the setting suggest the mysteries of the spiritual world.' Mihr Chand also altered the colour of the sky and altered the flat grey background for a deep blue sky that fades as it approaches the unseen horizon. Mihr Chand's choice of a brighter palette was clearly emphasised by the bright yellow and golden tones used on the straw hut, golden bowl and the golden lamb. Although the artist did not follow the colour scheme precisely, his version does offer the conceptual basis for the original miniature, which has suffered extensive damage and paint loss over time.

During the course of this research, by chance, I discovered the source for another work that has been attributed to Mihr Chand. In the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum, there is a portrait of Mir Jafar of Bengal that is attributed to Mihr Chand (figure 146).[107] This is a full-length portrait study of the Nawab of Bengal presented in profile against an Awadhi landscape. In the reconstructed 'St. Petersburg' album, there is a *nim qalam* drawing (figure 147) of the same figure, in the exact pose and dress; though there were minor additions of cypress trees and floral studies painted on either side. Welch entitled this version as a 'Courtier in a winter dress' (Akimushkin

[107] It is inscribed, above the painting: *'Taswir Mubassir Jafar Hamsare zade Khalife sultan'.*

1996, 50). In replicating the portrait, the artist transformed the simple drawing into a beautifully executed miniature painting. The artist's fine attention to detail included designing floral patterns to embellish the courtier's robes, bold colours for his pyjamas, and constructed one of his typical Awadhi landscapes in the background.

It is unclear if scholars were aware of the link between these two portraits. In terms of dating, the majority of Mihr Chand's paintings were produced between 1759-1786 in Faizabad and later in Delhi. As scholars (Akimushkin, 1996) assume that the St. Petersburg album was seized in 1739 by the Persians, one questions if Mihr Chand had access to this version in Delhi or if there was another copy elsewhere. It is more logical to assume that Mihr Chand obtained the ruler's portrait from another sketch that was brought from Delhi to the provinces in the 1760s, rather than this work, which left India by 1739.

Mihr Chand's paintings collectively demonstrate his need to rework paintings. From Gentil's collection, he reworked six miniatures. Two further works, 'Dervish receiving a visitor' and the portrait of Mir Jafar, also reveal this pattern. In Chapter 5, two other portraits were mentioned, of Humayun (figure 118) and Babur (143), which demonstrated his tendency to appropriate imagery from already existing works. In the course of conducting future research on Awadhi painting, it would not be unexpected to find additional pairs of original paintings and subsequent copies by Mihr Chand.

2. Multiple versions of paintings

Across the Polier albums, we find multiple copies of paintings. We find numerous portraits of Shuja ud-Daula, duplicate studies of 'Venus', multiple portraits of women appearing in windows, and copies of the illustrations of the Mughal landmarks. This phenomenon causes significant problems when attempting to authenticate the Mihr Chand's hand as well as raises the question of originality. With great difficulty, we must ascertain which of the versions are by Mihr Chand and if the remaining are by the artist himself or completed by a studio member. It is only through close examination of the stylistic variations, that one can identify Mihr Chand's mark. Prior to discussing these groups of works, Mihr Chand's intention and purpose must be discussed.

Throughout the 1770s and 1780s, Mihr Chand was heavily indebted to Polier's patronage; Polier's letters dictated the course of action Mihr Chand was to follow. In a series of letters addressed to the artist, we find some information that clarifies this

matter. Between December 1773 and May 1774, Polier wrote to Mihr Chand enquiring about his progress on his portrait studies of Shuja ud-Daula. A selection of Polier's (2001, fol. 37a, 109b, 113a, 114a) letters follow:

> The portrait of the Nawab that you had sent for me has been held back by Monsieur Gentil for himself. Make a similar portrait and keep it for me. You shall be generously rewarded when I reach Faizabad if you do my work with care and attention. 26 December 1773.
>
> For a long time I have no knowledge about the progress of your work: what you are doing and what you have done so far. I had asked you earlier to prepare five to six portraits of the Nawab. If these are ready it is fine; if not then prepare a specimen sketch with black ink and bring it along with you. 13 May 1774.
>
> Add two to three more portraits to the five or six I had written to you about and keep my order ready. I will inspect them at an appropriate time. 25 May 1774.
>
> I fail to understand why you are sitting idle. Prepare some more similar portraits if you have finished the ones you were engaged with so far. This [making portraits] is your work, and it is meaningless to sit idle. 26 May 1774.

Polier's high demand for portrait studies combined with financial incentives would have kept Mihr Chand's career afloat as well as affording him a comfortable lifestyle. In Polier's letter dated 26 December 1773, he instructed the artist to produce a 'similar portrait' of the Nawab that he had already received and was given to Gentil. Aside from using the phrase 'similar', there was no clear indication exactly what Polier expected from the artist. In analysing Mihr Chand's approach to producing portrait studies of Shuja ud-Daula, it was suggested in Chapter 5 that the artist followed a systematic approach and adapted three different models to produce multiple studies of the Nawab for his employer.

Alongside Polier's letters to the artist, the works of art that he commissioned provide further insight into Mihr Chand's artistic process and reasoning for duplicate versions. In Polier's estimation, examples of Awadhi painting were unique gifts that he could present to his close friends, new acquaintances, as well as other connoisseurs he may have encountered. Aside from the portrait of Shuja ud-Daula that he gave away to Gentil, there are other paintings from his collection that were presented to his friends and guests. In 1786, Polier presented to both Lady Coote and the artist Ozias Humphrey a set of paintings. Lady Coote was the recipient of an exquisite, large-format bound album of paintings and calligraphy. This volume included a portrait of Shuja ud-Daula, a view of the Red Fort, as well as multiple scenes of entertainment inside the harem. On

11 May 1786, the artist Ozias Humphrey who had been visiting Lucknow, received a set of three illustrations including a view of the Red Fort, a scene of 'Acrobats performing in the zenana', as well a view of an 'Encampment on the plains'.[108]

In reviewing the albums compiled for Polier, Mihr Chand and his workshop avoided placing duplicate paintings within the same album. Although there may have been two portraits of Shuja ud-Daula within the same album, they would have been different in compositional format. To discuss every duplicate (or multiple) set of paintings within the entire Polier series would require a separate thesis altogether. Instead, we will remain focused on only the illustrations that are signed or here attributed to Mihr Chand.

As the majority of Mihr Chand's illustrations have been discussed at length in the preceding chapters, we will only briefly discuss these copies. The first issue that needs to be addressed is that not all identical paintings are ascribed to the artist. This raises the question, did Mihr Chand produce the master copy and was his workshop responsible for finishing the duplicate versions? Only by close examination of the artist's brushstrokes and the finishing quality one can determine this answer.

In Chapter 5, Mihr Chand's multiple portraits of Shuja ud-Daula, holding a bow with attendants and an elephant in the background, were mentioned. These were directly modelled on Tilly Kettle's portraits of the Nawab. Today, four versions of this portrait can be located; two are ascribed to Mihr Chand. Upon close examination, the compositional format and the high quality of the painting reveals that Mihr Chand produced all four versions.

The Berlin version (figure 159) and the San Francisco version (figure 160) are very similar. In the background of these works, the artist included dark and stormy clouds that were drawn in a similar style. Viewing the third version, at the Victoria & Albert Museum (figure 161), the artist selected to picture a clear blue sky rather than an approaching storm. Stylistically, these three miniatures, in terms of the approach to shadowing, fine detailing of the Nawab's costume, as well as the compositional format of the group of attendants and elephant in the distance, are very close in style. When comparing the format with the last known version, at the British Museum (figure 162), there is a slight discrepancy. Immediately drawn to the viewer's attention is the fact that there is a horse instead of an elephant in the background. After close examination, it appears that the artist also modified the patterns of the Nawab's clothing and opted for different floral designs on the *angarkha* (the calf-length costume) and the *farji* (the

[108] BM, Add.15969.

sleeveless overcoat). In the signed Berlin version, Mihr Chand decorated the fabric of the *farji* with individual floral studies as well as depictions of horses and elephants with riders.

In reviewing these four portraits of Shuja ud-Daula, there are two main points that need to be addressed. First, the Berlin (figure 159) and San Francisco (figure 160) versions can be directly traced to Polier's patronage, as these were incorporated into albums bearing Polier's name or details of ownership. The other two versions cannot. Nonetheless, Polier's letters suggest that Mihr Chand produced multiple portraits of the Nawab; the evidence of albums and individual paintings presented to his friends does suggest that these two versions, the British Museum and the Victoria & Albert copies, may have also passed from Polier's hands to one of his acquaintances. The second point, should we consider these works to be 'original' in light of the fact Mihr Chand directly appropriated imagery from Tilly Kettle's portraits? In viewing Mihr Chand's versions, it is relatively clear that Mihr Chand was not wishing to create an exact copy; rather, he adapted Kettle's portrayal of the Nawab and made adjustments to the setting in order to create a harmonious composition that would be congruous with the Awadhi idiom. Overall, his presentation should be accepted as 'original'.

Aside from portraits of Shuja ud-Daula, Mihr Chand produced multiple portrait studies of other figures; he made certain that duplicate copies would not appear within the same albums. The artist prepared two portraits of Shah Alam II, though only one was ascribed to the artist (figure 80). The signed copy was placed into an album containing the bulk of Mihr Chand's known paintings collected by the Swiss native. Polier's workshop included the second copy into the album '*Genialogie des Empereurs*' (figure 83), which consisted of a series of portraits of the Mughal emperors. These two portraits of Shah Alam II were almost identical. The main discrepancy was that the overall quality of the unsigned copy was slightly inferior; the surface lacked the 'polished' finishing.

In the British Library, there is a portrait of a *mullah* that is attributed here to Mihr Chand (figure 123). Although this work was ascribed to Bahadur Singh, a contemporary Lucknow artist, the stylistic nuances and the finishing quality of the painting are reflective of Mihr Chand's hand. Researching Bahadur Singh's paintings that were produced in this period, it is clear that this artist worked in a completely different style. Furthermore, the Awadhi landscape setting in this portrait does not appear in any of Bahadur Singh's known paintings. A second version of this portrait is in the collection of the Chester Beatty Library (figure 122). This version is unsigned,

though Linda Leach attributes it to Bahadur Singh. I argue that both of these studies should be instead attributed to Mihr Chand on basis of the Awadhi landscape setting. In terms of provenance, Richard Johnson acquired the first portrait whilst living in Lucknow during the period 1780-82. The provenance of the Chester Beatty version cannot be traced.

Polier's albums still require further research. Amongst three different albums, there are six separate portraits of women that follow the same pattern. I suggest that these portraits should be attributed to Mihr Chand for reasons expounded below. In creating these systematic portraits of women, Mihr Chand adopted a *jharoka* frame to devise the compositional format. Using the same female model for all of these portraits, she was positioned in profile facing the viewer's left. His depictions were formulaic; he provided a waist-length study of each woman with her right hand held up, holding either a flower, jewel, or with her fingers pressed together. Her left arm was awkwardly positioned at a 90-degree angle. In the background, the artist inserted a second window. From this window, the viewer could look out into the distance. As part of the *jharoka* frame, he included a window blind and a fabric draped over the parapet. He used the same gold fabric with floral patterns for the curtain fabric. Looking closely at the window blind, we can see Mihr Chand's attention to detail and the shadows that were cast along the right side of the blind. This stylistic nuance was previously seen in his portrait of an unidentified Mughal lady (figure 150). Aside from the modelling of the fabrics and the overall quality of the painting, it is the approach to the topographical view – that is visible through the second window – that is a clear indication of Mihr Chand's hand.

We will now review the details each portrait of a woman set within a *jharoka* frame. In figure 173, we are presented with a portrait of a woman with a diaphanous *dupatta* draped over her head. Through the second window we see a planned garden, the Taj Mahal, as well the Jamuna River. In figure 149, the artist embellished the woman's costume and adorned her with an Awadhi-style turban. Rather than a Mughal landmark, the artist illustrated a river scene through the background window.

In the Lady Coote album, on either side of a portrait of Shuja ud-Daula, there are two portraits of this woman (Figure 202). On the left, the artist portrayed her with a slightly less prominent nose; through the background window we see a river and a *char-bagh* garden. On the right, the portrait deviates from Mihr Chand's formulaic approach. Here, the artist allowed the lady's left hand to rest naturally on the parapet rather than leaving it bent at a 90-degree angle. Next, he altered the format of the windows. Instead

of the background window pictured set to one side, both windows were of the same width. Effectively, the viewer would look through both windows simultaneously.

In the Phillipps album, the same female model is utilised again. In figure 203, the lady is pictured wearing a sheer *dupatta* over her head, a high blouse that covered her voluptuous breasts and left her torso bare, and a pleated skirt. As in the case of the other portraits, she was heavily adorned with necklaces, armbands, bracelets, elaborate earrings and multiple rings. Using the double window convention, the artist was able picture a garden and a mosque in the distance. A second portrait of this unidentified woman appears in the same album; the artist used the *jharoka* format, with the window blind and fabric draped over the parapet (figure 204). The female model is pictured holding a jewel in her right hand. However, rather than inserting a second window, the artist opted to create a solid background wall.

In the Phillipps album and in one of the Berlin albums, we come across an additional two window portraits. In these examples (figures 198 and 205), Mihr Chand altered the overall compositional format; instead of a window decorated with gold coloured blinds and fabrics, he created a latticed window frame. Nonetheless, he still continued to use the same female model. Again, she is positioned in profile with her body positioned to the left. Propped against a bolster, the curvaceous woman holds a *tambura* against her figure.

Aside from the studies of women, Polier's albums in Berlin also included two identical portraits of Venus that were painted by Mihr Chand (figures 168 and 169). These two works were previously discussed in Chapter 5. In these portraits of the Roman goddess, Mihr Chand presented her unclothed, lying outdoors against a pile of pillows. As it is assumed that the artist prepared his study based on a European engraving or prints, he continued with the original background setting of red velvet curtains on the right and a picturesque landscape on the left. These two, signed paintings were bound into two different albums belonging to Polier. As these two works varied slightly in size, it is possible that the smaller version was a preliminary study (figure 169). The larger version was incorporated into the Berlin album MIK I 4594 (which holds the majority of Mihr Chand's miniatures); the second was included into Berlin album MIK 4595, which contains an assortment of paintings and examples of calligraphy.

From the signed oeuvres by Mihr Chand, it comes as no surprise that portraiture was his favourite genre and subsequently the most commonly reproduced. Whilst the artist's intention to produce multiple portraits of Shuja ud-Daula is explained by

Polier's letters, it is very likely that Mihr Chand followed the same methodology (of using the same model, in a range of settings) to create multiple portraits of the unidentified lady. By using this methodology, Mihr Chand increased his productivity and in turn would increase his profits as he had the option to include the portraits into any of Polier's albums or sell them individually. Aside from portraiture, Mihr Chand and his studio were able to produce numerous illustrations of the Mughal landmarks, as mentioned in Chapter 6.

Chapter 6 provided an in-depth review of the Mughal landmarks, including the views of the Red Fort and the Jami Masjid in Delhi as well as the Taj Mahal, which are all unsigned though attributed here to Mihr Chand. As the sets of these illustrations have been already discussed at length, I will briefly mention them again.

In the previous chapter, I mentioned that there were four versions of the view of the Red Fort. Whilst I suggest that Mihr Chand was responsible for the Berlin painting (figure 189), it is very likely that the other three versions were based on his original. These versions, found in Toronto (figure 193), London (figure 192), and San Francisco (figure 188), should be instead attributed to Mihr Chand's studio; the noticeable differences include the haphazard approach to perspective, the disorderly approach to rendering the planned gardens, and an inferior finishing quality.

As of this date, only two similar illustrations of the Jami Masjid in Delhi have been located. In Berlin (figure 190), we see Mihr Chand's refined illustration of the mosque. The second copy, in the collection of the Sackler Museum at Harvard (figure 187), is not as refined. The major criticism of this work is that the artist was unable to contain the drawing of the mosque and its components within the picture plane. To identify Mihr Chand's hand, we seek unique features that he would have included to produce a realistic view of the mosque. In his versions of Red Fort and the Jami Masjid, the artist was conscious to add the surrounding setting, including the local marketplaces and residences that dot Delhi's skyline.

Of the architectural vistas, Mihr Chand's view of the Taj Mahal is the most important. The two known copies, one in Berlin (figure 191) and the second sold through a London gallery (figure 195), we are presented with the artist's avant-garde usage of the naturalistic viewpoint and centralised perspective.

This chapter has brought to the reader's attention, that Mihr Chand and his studio were responsible for producing multiple sets of paintings, including the portraits of Shuja ud-Daula and the Awadhi lady, as well as the topographical views of Agra and Delhi. Nonetheless, it is necessary that we realise that it was Mihr Chand who coined

the original drawings. In some cases, such as the views of the Red Fort, we clearly see a second and possibly a third artist's hand. Answering the question why Mihr Chand and his workshop produced multiple versions of the architectural views is straightforward. It can be assumed that Mihr Chand was acting on a direct request from Polier.

Revisiting the question of originality, Mihr Chand's oeuvres do exhibit his ingenuity. Mihr Chand's portrait of 'Colonel Polier watching a *nautch*' (figure 1), his 'Garden scene' (figure 105) as well as his topographical views of Agra and Delhi, are truly unique and demonstrate his stylistic achievements during the course of his career. Nonetheless, his general trend in appropriating imagery from already existing paintings did initially cause some concern. Though it is the way he adjusted these scenes from Gentil's collection and Kettle's physiognomy of Shuja ud-Daula that we begin to realise his mastery with western techniques and his willingness to experiment at every level. As a result, he revolutionised Awadhi painting by adding his unique touches including the Awadhi landscape and the single-point perspective. Within the broader framework of Awadhi painting, no other artist has made such an impact on the local painting tradition. However, in the course of future research, Mihr Chand's position as the forerunner of the Awadhi tradition could be challenged.

EPILOGUE

In the course of this study, it is Mihr Chand's voice that remains unheard; by extrapolating from the correspondence sent by Antoine Polier to the artist, we are able to obtain some idea of the artist's point of view. Through the paintings ascribed to the artist within the Polier albums, we are able to assemble a comprehensive overview of his stylistic evolution. Nonetheless, the evidence presented in this thesis does demonstrate that without Polier's patronage and beneficence, we may not have been able to construct a framework on the artist's career and begin to understand how his painterly style altered through the course of the late eighteenth century painting tradition. Furthermore, as a consequence of Polier's patronage and the artist's exemplary paintings in the Polier albums, art historians have been immediately drawn to Mihr Chand. Of all the Awadhi artists, including Nevasi Lal and Mir Kalan Khan, Mihr Chand has received the most attention from scholars.

Patronage is the essential factor that determines the career path for an artist. However, amongst scholars (Leach 1995; Welch 1997; Akimushkin 1996), there is the general misconception that Awadhi artists obtained patronage from the early Nawabs of Awadh, particularly Shuja ud-Daula. Even so, they have not provided conclusive evidence to support their claim.[109] Auction houses and museum catalogues mislead us to believe that there are specific albums that were commissioned by the Nawabs of Awadh, though there are no inscriptions that substantiate their claim. However, it must be mentioned that there are individual paintings with seals of ownership (of Shuja ud-Daula and Asaf ud-Daula) that suggests that these specific paintings were at one point part of the Nawabi library.

Without doubt, artists of Muhammad Shah's atelier did relocate to Faizabad and Lucknow in the second half of the eighteenth century. We have evidence that Nidha Mal, Mir Kalan Khan, and Hunhar 'appeared' in the region by the 1760s; it is their generation that was responsible for instigating a derivative painting tradition in the Mughal provinces during Shuja ud-Daula's reign. Of interest, there are a few poignant studies by artists including Gobind Singh and Mir Kalan Khan of Shuja ud-Daula, which are suggestive that a few artists were privileged to receive the fleeting attention of the Nawab.

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[109] Schmitz and Desai (2006, 114) have located one manuscript with three illustrations, the *Jangnama-i Asaf ud-Daula* ('Book of the battles of Asaf ud-Daula'), c. 1780, that must have been commissioned by Asaf ud-Daula. However, this is not enough to suggest that he was a major patron.

Aside from the difficulty we face to connect Shuja ud-Daula with the inception of the Awadhi painting tradition, it is also impossible to determine the other major players, amongst Shuja's courtiers, that may have supported the displaced Delhi artists. In researching the topic of patronage, we would assume that the Mughal emperor Shah Alam II might have sponsored artists in this region from 1750 to 1772. Again, there is limited evidence, in the form of portrait studies of Shah Alam II or even illustrated manuscripts that are suggestive of imperial patronage.

Although there is difficulty to substantiate Nawabi and imperial patronage in the region, there is significant evidence that European officers played a pivotal role in commissioning Awadh based artists. Mildred Archer and Toby Falk (1981) have published information on the types of paintings and illustrations commissioned by Antoine Polier, Richard Johnson, and Jean Baptiste Gentil. After conducting further research on the local artists, including Mihr Chand, it is apparent that the majority of artists turned to British and European officers stationed in Awadh and Bengal in order to find work and to maintain their livelihoods.

Mihr Chand was exceptionally lucky. Aside from ordering paintings, Polier covered the artist's personal expenses and provided him with a place to live and a studio. In researching Mihr Chand's contemporaries, we can find the majority of their names through the signed works in Johnson and Gentil's collections. Only a few artists working in Faizabad and Lucknow cannot be traced directly to one of these three men. As a result, it has become essential that these workshops established by Polier, Gentil, and Johnson must be recognised as the core group supporting and providing motivation for Awadhi artists in this period, rather than the Nawabs of Awadh.

Antoine Polier's (2001) correspondence to Mihr Chand offers extensive details regarding the artist's career. For the first time in the history of Indian art, we are presented with the unique situation where we find the personal correspondence sent from a patron to an artist. Polier's letters confirm that Mihr Chand resided in Faizabad during the years 1773-80 and that he subsequently relocated to Delhi in 1780. Although Polier's letters are extremely noteworthy and the type of information is exceedingly rare, it does not offer the specifics regarding the artist's origins and the early phase of his career. However, we can draw some conclusions about his career; Mihr Chand was appointed as the head of Polier's workshop and ultimately accepted in the capacity of a personal confidante who was permitted to mingle with Polier's friends. Perhaps the conclusions drawn, places Mihr Chand on a pedestal and grossly exaggerates Polier's trust in the artist. Nonetheless, we have documentation on the fact that Polier often

asked the artist to keep an eye on his household staff, as well as meet with his European associates such as Colonel Harper and Claude Martin.

Polier's encouragement provided Mihr Chand with the impetus to succeed and ultimately become a forerunner of the Awadhi tradition. Polier constantly challenged Mihr Chand's ability; he would only accept the finest specimens of paintings to be included into his collection. Perhaps this was reason why the paintings commissioned by Polier were of a higher quality than those produced in the workshops of Gentil and Johnson. From the evidence of the manuscripts commissioned by Gentil, it is apparent that Nevasi Lal and Mohan Singh primarily produced simple illustrations and drawings to accompany several manuscripts. The exclusive purpose of these illustrations, were to offer visual support to the text; the lower calibre of the painterly style was intentional. Although Nevasi Lal and Mohan Singh were trained in the late Mughal tradition, Gentil was simply looking for quick illustrations to accompany the narrative texts.

Compared to Polier and Gentil, Johnson only spent two years in Lucknow. In this period from 1780-82, he commissioned at least seven artists to produce sketches and drawings of the various *ragas* and *raginis* in the genre of *ragamala* painting. Although some of his artists, such as Sital Das and Gobind Singh, were exceptionally talented, the evidence in the Johnson collection at the British Library is not reflective of their talent as a whole. Perhaps this was a direct consequence of time and financial constraints imposed by Johnson.

Until now, scholars have only made a peripheral review of the Awadhi painting tradition. This thesis, therefore, fills the void in art historical scholarship and provides a basis to continue researching Awadhi artists and their style. Through this exhaustive exercise, it has become clear that British and European patronage played a vital part in encouraging the growth of the artistic tradition. This research provides scholars a revised overview, a comprehensive list of the Awadhi artists, and suggests the preferred genres and subjects painted in this period.

In terms of the Polier albums in Berlin, in the collection of the Museum für Islamische Kunst, it is the fine examples of early Mughal and Deccani painting that have attracted the attention of art historians. At the start of this research, it was surprising to discover how little information has been published on Mihr Chand and his paintings within the albums. However, by undertaking this exhaustive research, it has been possible to construct a framework of Mihr Chand's painterly style.

From the moment Mihr Chand obtained employment with Polier, he was constantly challenged to produce paintings and fulfil the repeated requests sent by his

patron. Recognising the merits of Tilly Kettle's portraits of Shuja ud-Daula, Mihr Chand immediately focused his attention on emulating Kettle's approach and appropriating the intricate details that were presented in these realistic studies. Kettle's work provided Mihr Chand with an alternative approach to portraiture, which was radically different from the idealised portraits produced by his contemporaries. In fulfilling Polier's demand for multiple portrait studies of Shuja ud-Daula, Mihr Chand repeatedly borrowed from Kettle's oeuvres. By doing so, he could experiment with the three-quarter profile and frontal representations, as well as provide a accurate portrayal of the Nawab's visage.

In researching portraits of Shuja ud-Daula and Shah Alam II, the significance of Mihr Chand's contribution emerges. Until 1770, only a few portraits of the Nawab were produced. The few known examples included Gobind Singh's portrait (figure 23) and Mir Kalan Khan's (figure 27). During the period 1773 and 1786, Mihr Chand's portraits were circulated amongst Polier's core circle of friends and presented to acquaintances. These iconic portraits, albeit based on Tilly Kettle's studies, would influence the younger generation of artists. Aside from Mihr Chand's portraits of Shuja ud-Daula, he should also be credited for coining the iconography of Shah Alam II, which was also recycled by his contemporaries and later generations of artists.

Mihr Chand's impact within the Awadhi tradition was not limited to his portrait studies. In the course of researching Awadhi painting, we often notice the 'Awadhi' landscape that was commonly used by artists. Rather than static backgrounds, this newly devised approach combined aerial perspective and systematically designed landscapes to insinuate spatial recession. In this thesis, it is suggested that Mihr Chand coined the quintessential Awadhi landscape by drawing on the works of Joseph Tieffenthaler and the Murshidabad based artist Dip Chand. As a result, Mihr Chand devised a highly stylised landscape that included a low horizon point, a flat expanse of a grassy plain dotted with miniaturised trees, and a range of mountains along the horizon that reflected the tonal changes associated with aerial perspective. This new approach would be mimicked by his followers and become standard in Awadhi painting. Nonetheless, his followers would simplify the background design by using smudges of green paint to insinuate shrubs or trees, a lowered horizon point, and aerial perspective. In addition, these artists showed a preference for using thin, water based pigments, rather than achieving an opaque hardness as used by Mihr Chand.

The albums commissioned by Polier are filled with surprises. The large format series of topographical views and illustrations of the Mughal monuments have received

limited scholarly attention (Gadebusch 2000). This thesis identifies the specific illustrations and versions that are here attributed to Mihr Chand. From analysing the views of the Taj Mahal, the Red Fort, and the Jami Masjid in Delhi, we become aware of Mihr Chand's avant-garde attitude and original contributions to the later Mughal painting tradition. In the wider context of Indian painting (through the first quarter of the nineteenth century), there was no specified genre of topographical studies. Very few maps of cities and plans of Mughal monuments were produced in Awadh and Delhi by the 1770s. Mihr Chand's illustrations of the Mughal landmarks assisted in establishing this new genre within later Muhgal tradition. Furthermore, his use of single point perspective to render these buildings would be later adopted by future generations of artists in Delhi and Agra. The artist's astute ability to accurately render the landmarks using this western technique is characteristic of his forward thinking and cannot be matched by any of his contemporaries. The earliest architectural studies using single-point perspective known to scholars have been dated to the turn of the nineteenth century and were produced in places such as Murshidabad and Agra, which were influenced by the arrival of European artists such as the Daniells as well as draughtsmen working for the East India Company. With the evidence of Mihr Chand's illustrations, this date can now be brought forward to the mid-1770s, almost twenty-five years prior to the genre becoming fashionable amongst Indian artists in northern India.

Recognising Mihr Chand's achievements, in terms of portraiture, coining the Awadhi landscape, and providing topographical overviews of Agra and Delhi, are straightforward to comprehend. However, there is a final piece to the puzzle that assists in deconstructing Mihr Chand's idiosyncrasy. In cross-examining the Polier, Gentil, and Johnson collections, a monumental discovery has been found that alters the initial assumptions that scholars have had on the artist's style and paintings. Whilst one would assume that Mihr Chand's paintings were original compositions, the cross-examination of these collections proves the contrary. After a thorough first hand review of both the Polier albums in Berlin and the Gentil collection in Paris, it is evident that Mihr Chand systematically copied entire compositions from Gentil's collection and created new versions that he would place in Polier's albums. Without the first-hand investigation, it would be impossible to have come to this same conclusion. Until now, Kühnel has been the only scholar to notice the similarities between two portraits of Shayasteh Khan (figures 85 and 86), one by Mihr Chand and a second by Illiyas Khan.

As a result of Mihr Chand's portrait, scholars including Verma (1994) and Kühnel (1922) were mislead to assume that Mihr Chand was in fact an artist of the late

Shah Jahan or Aurangzeb period. Unfortunately, due to the lack of published material and the perhaps the repercussions of the First World War (which did not permit him the opportunity to travel to Paris), that Kühnel did not realise the extent of the similarities between these two albums.

This discovery of Mihr Chand's artistic endeavours could potentially compromise his position as one of the leading Awadhi artists of his time. Nonetheless, in examining Mihr Chand's versions of the paintings from Gentil's collection, it becomes relatively clear that his intention was not to create a forgery or mislead the viewer to accept his version as the original. Instead, Mihr Chand's objective was to demonstrate that he could produce harmonious and realistic compositions. Throughout Mihr Chand's oeuvres, we are reminded of his attention to detail and ability to master the art of presentation; though above all we must recognise his ingenuity, which alters our undertanding of originality within the context of the late Mughal painting tradition.

ILLUSTRATIONS

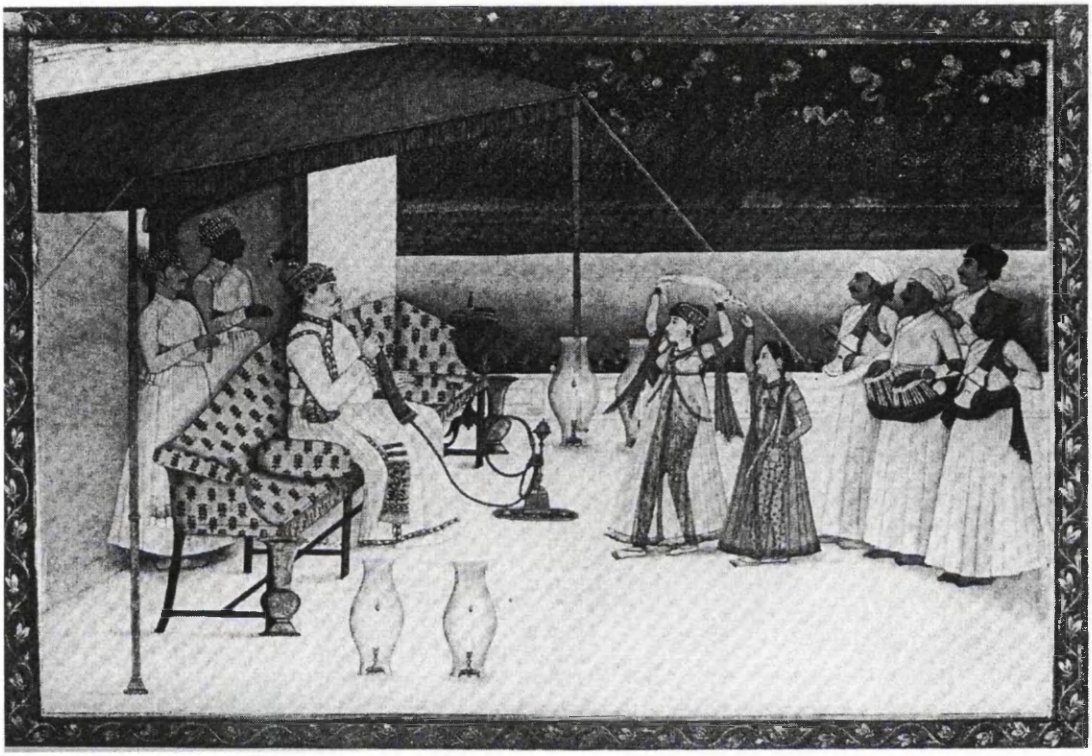


Figure 1 **'Colonel Polier watching a nautch', by Mihr Chand. Faizabad, 1773-74.**

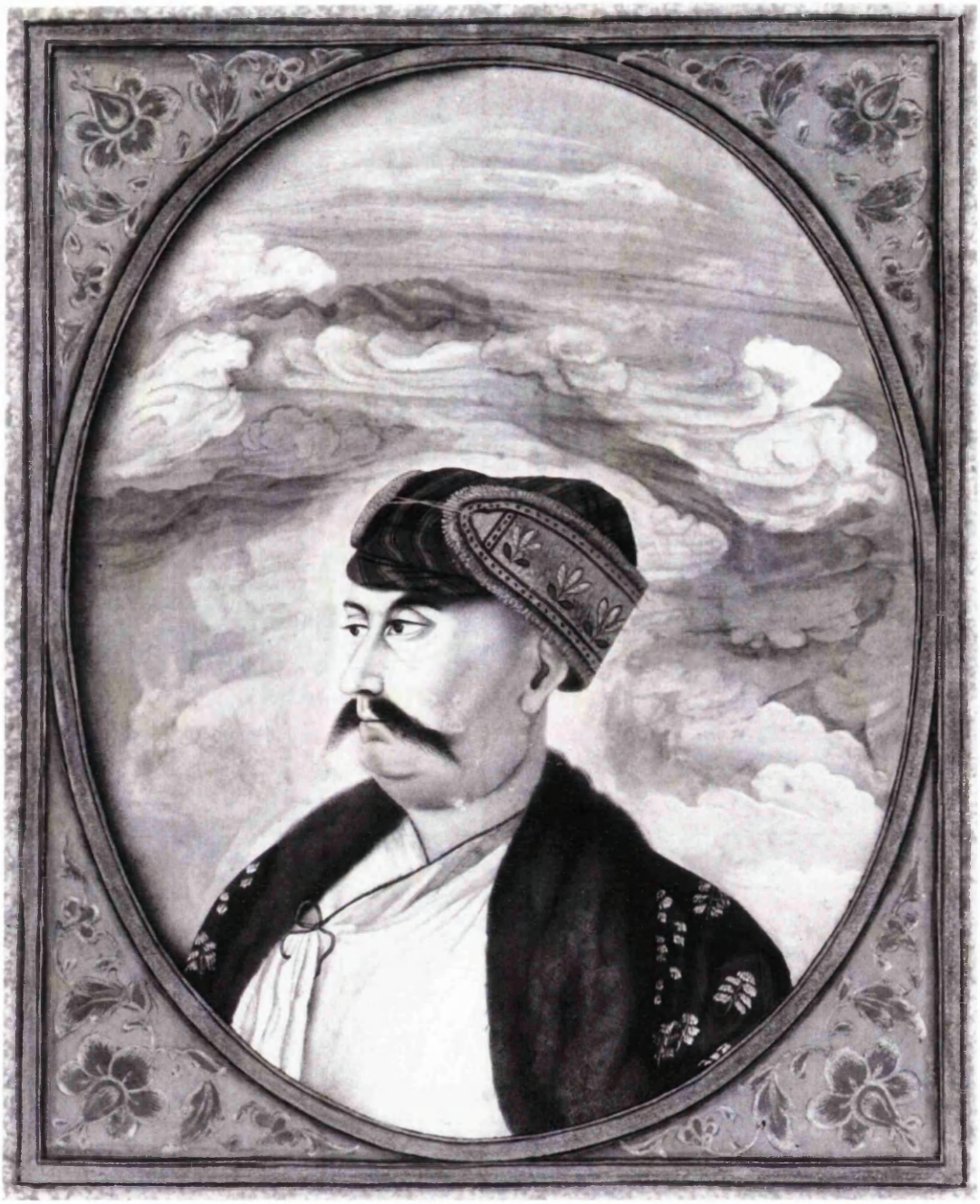


Figure 2 **Shuja ud-Daula, by Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1773-74.**

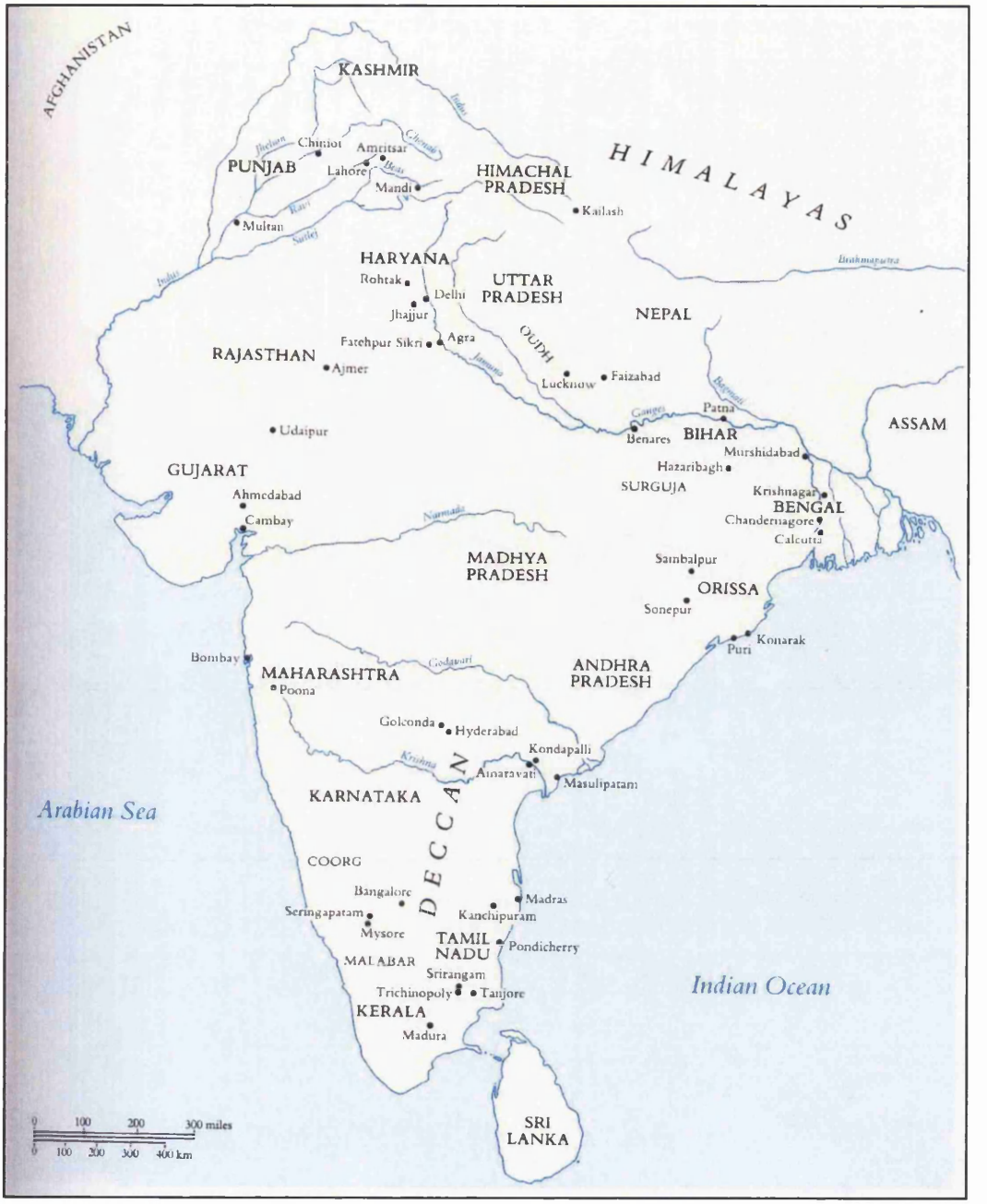
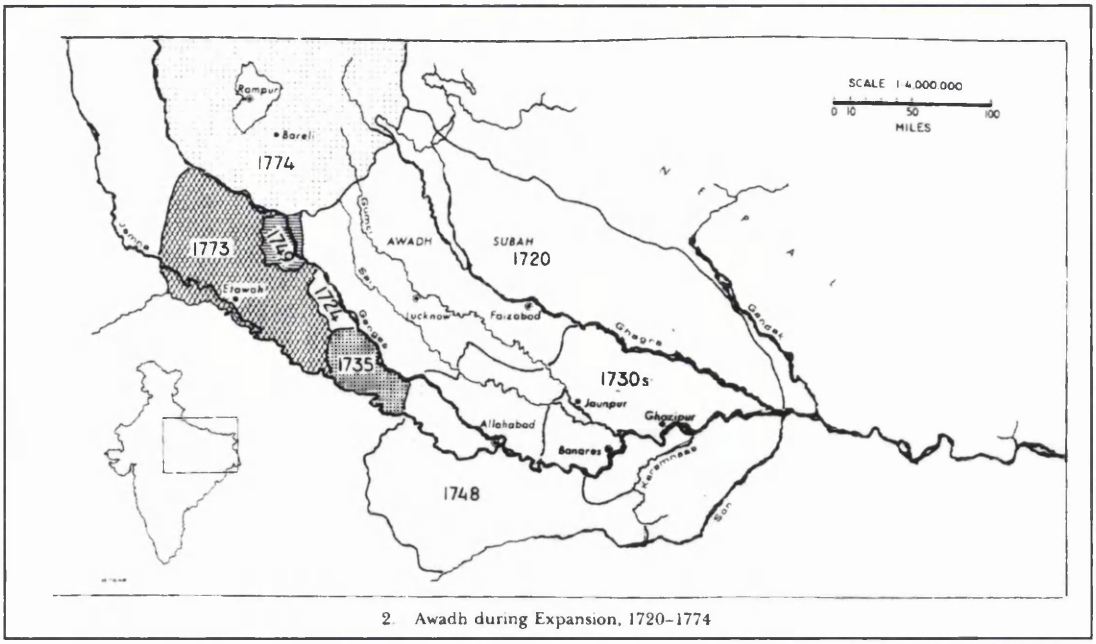
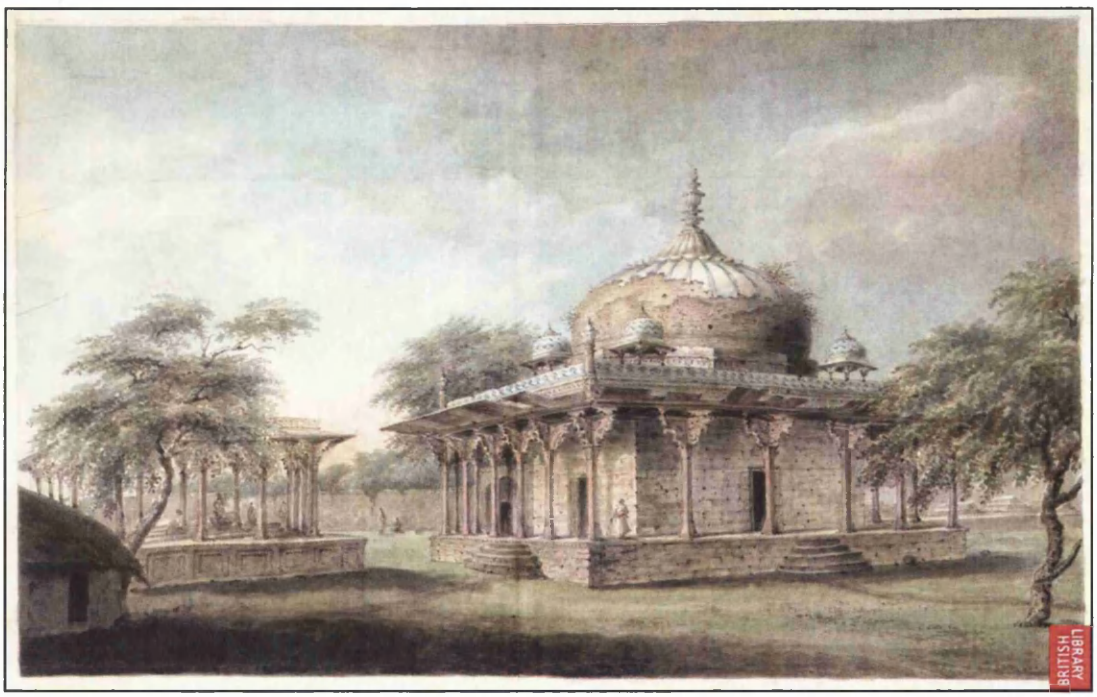


Figure 3 Map of India.



2. Awadh during Expansion, 1720–1774

Figure 4 **Map of Awadh during Expansion, 1720-1774.**



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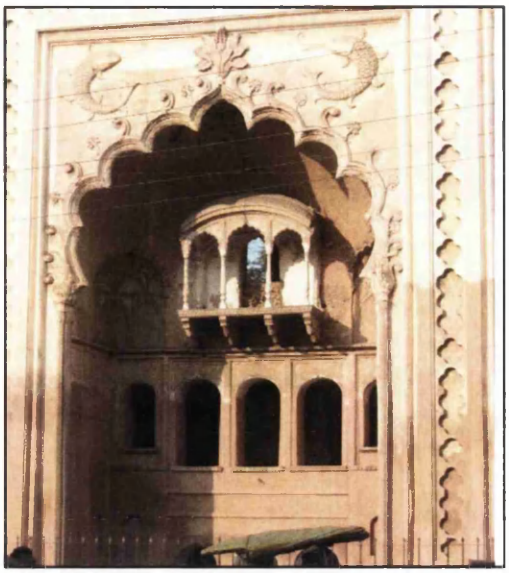

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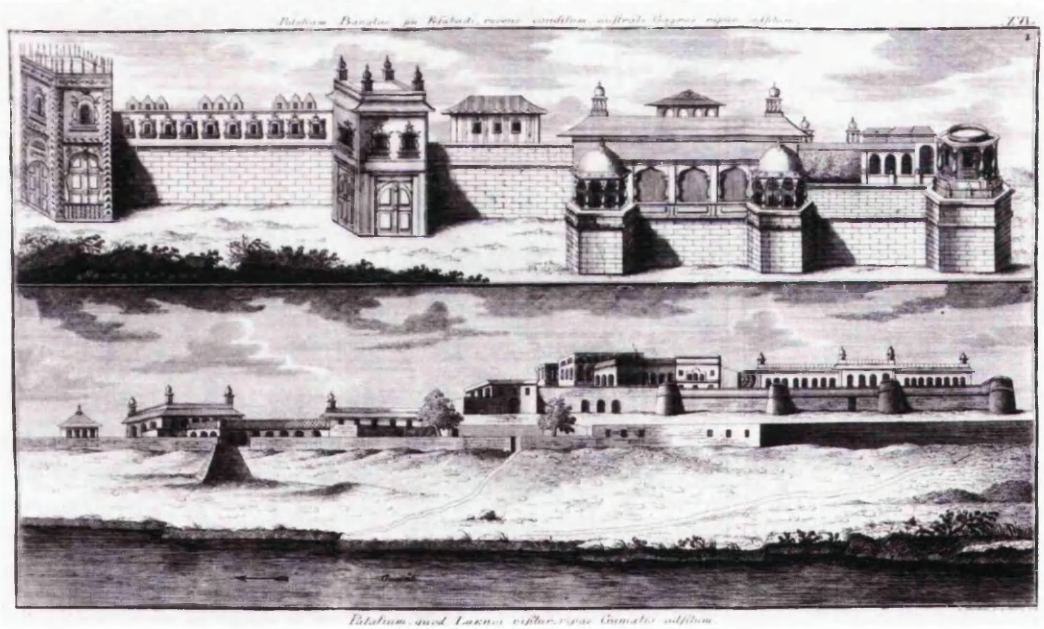

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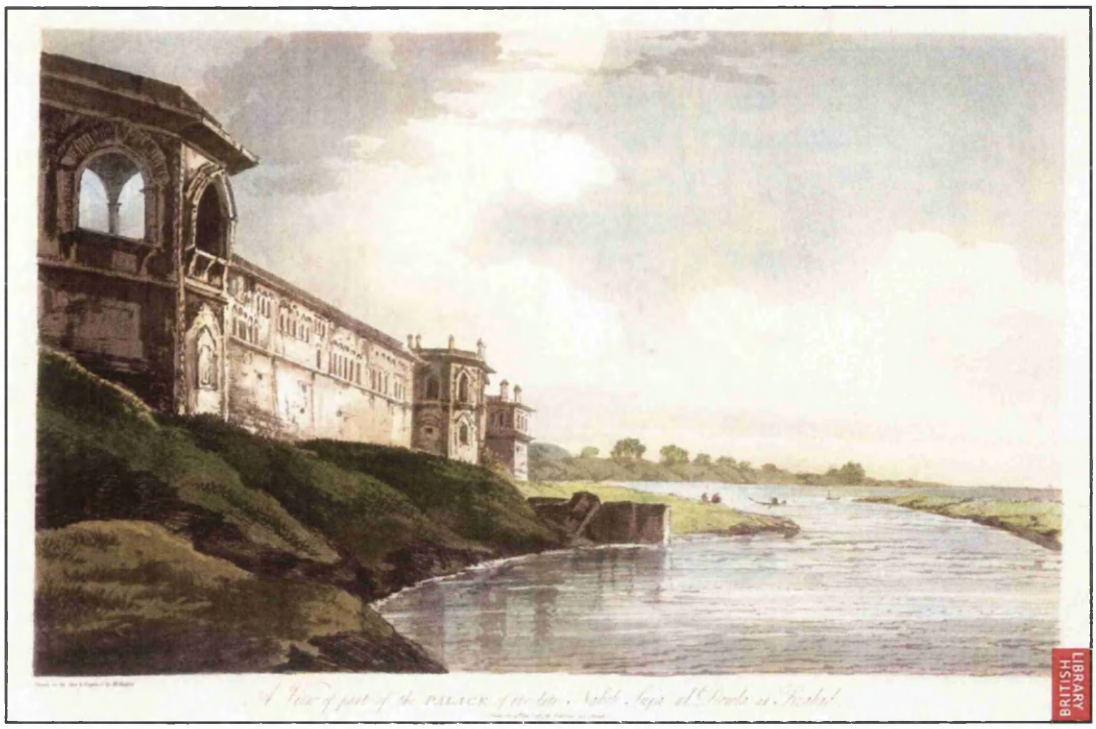

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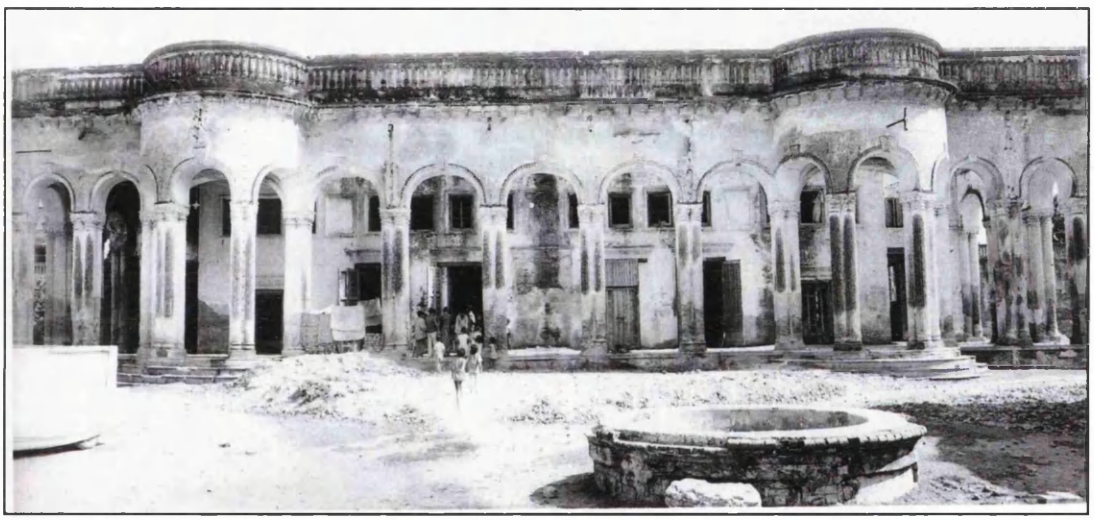

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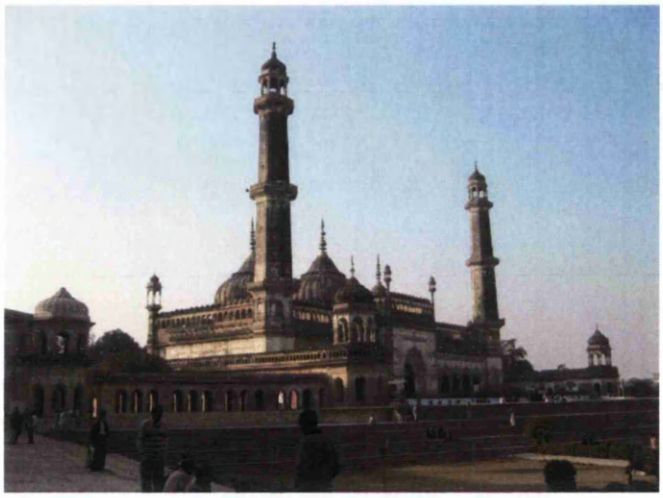
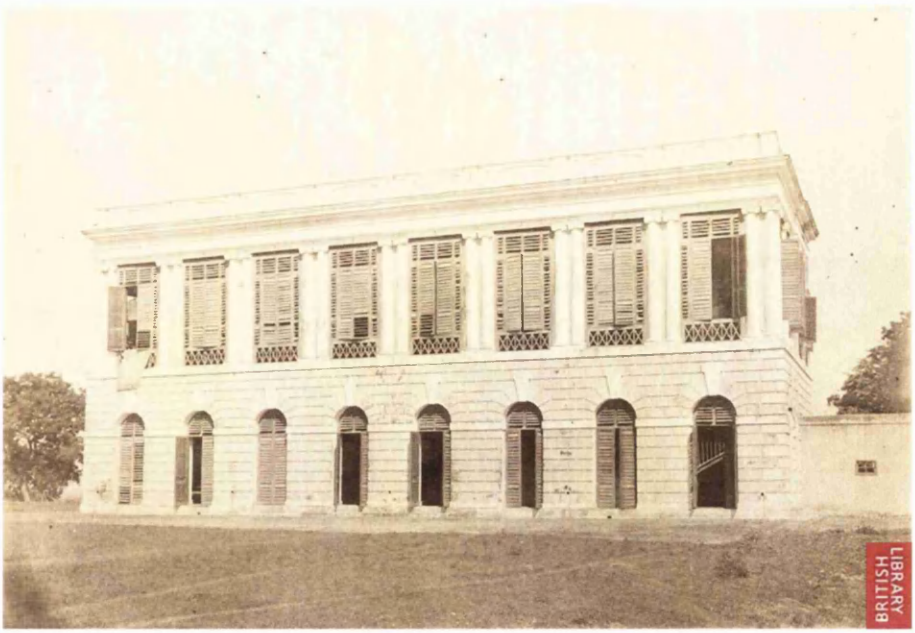


Figure 18 **Asafi Mosque, Lucknow.**



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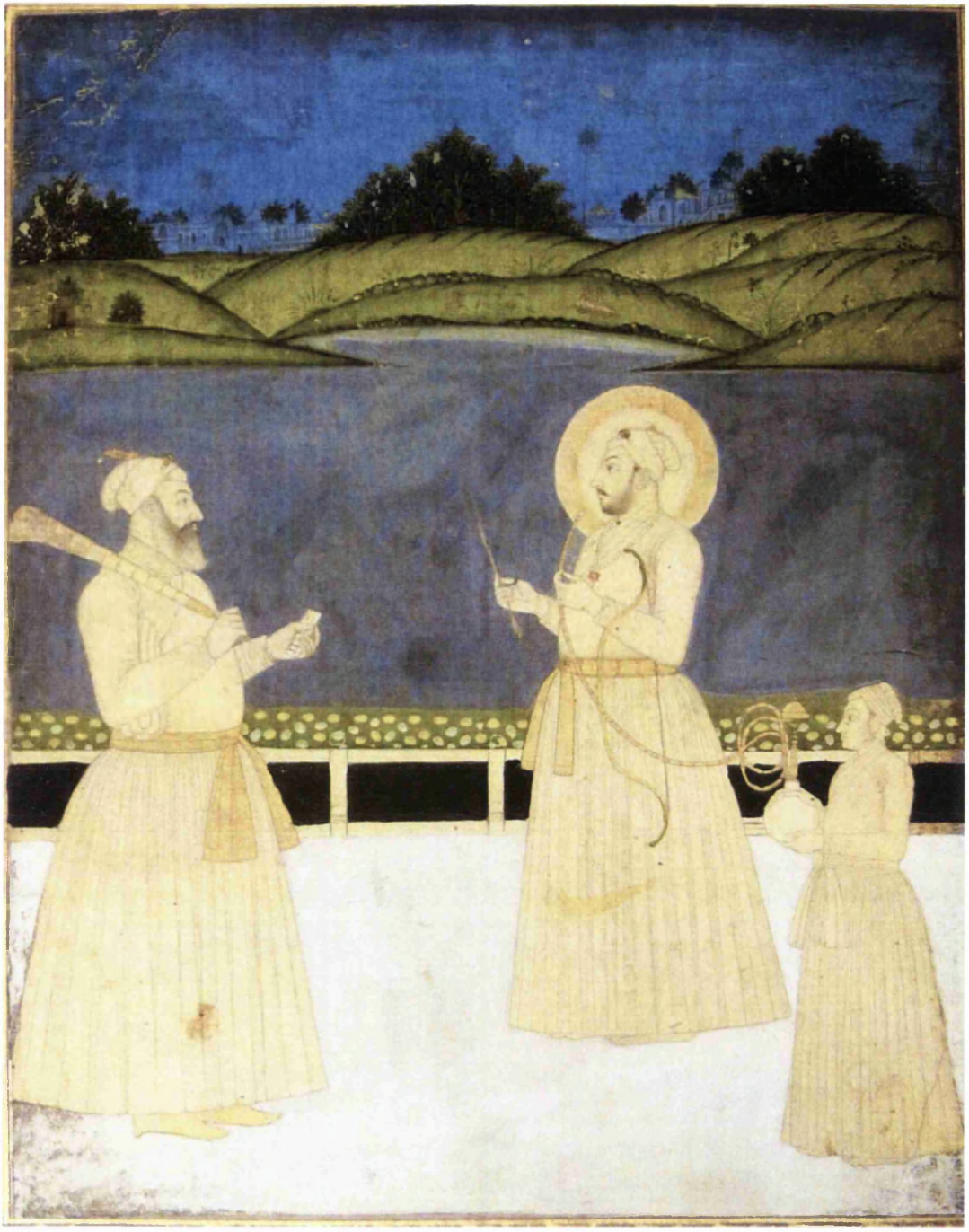

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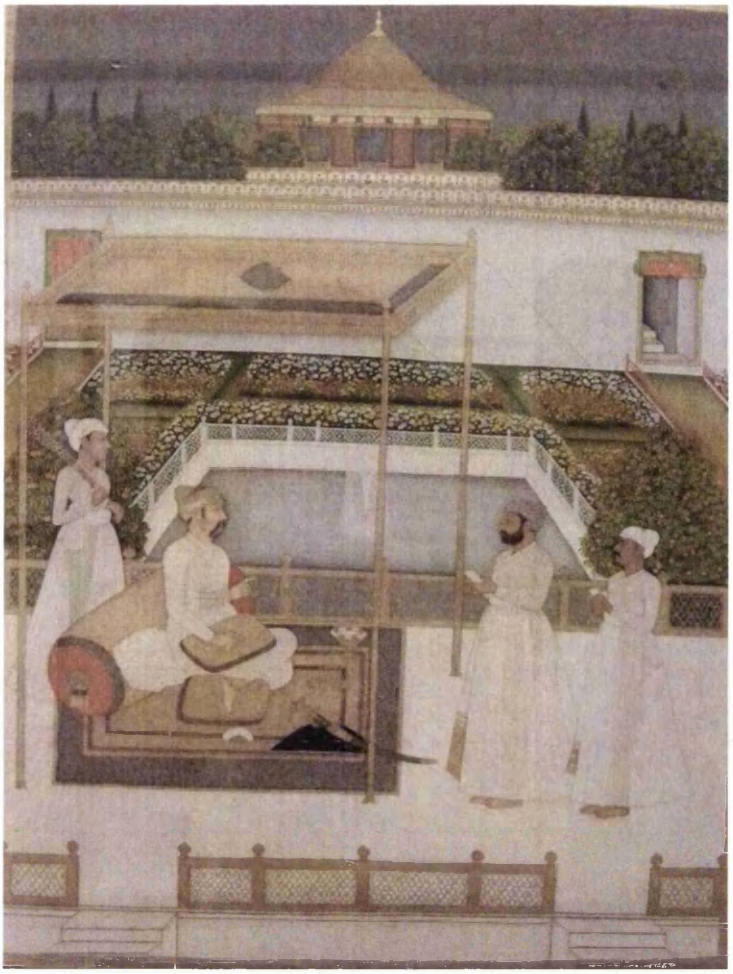

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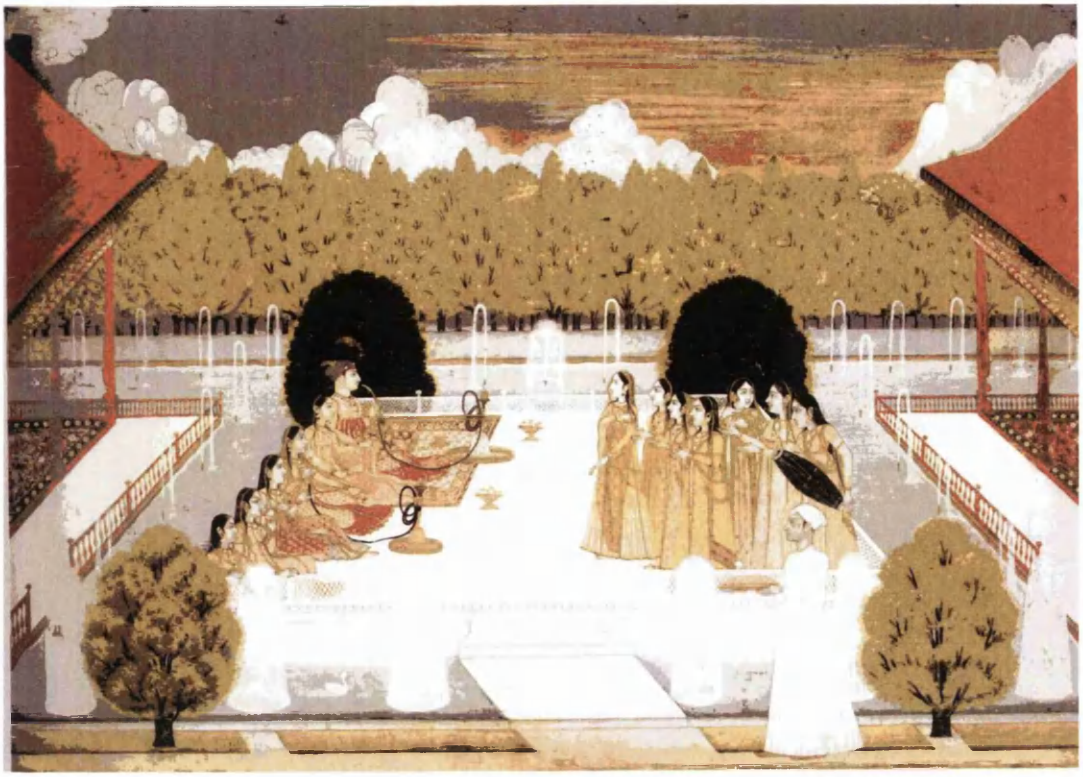

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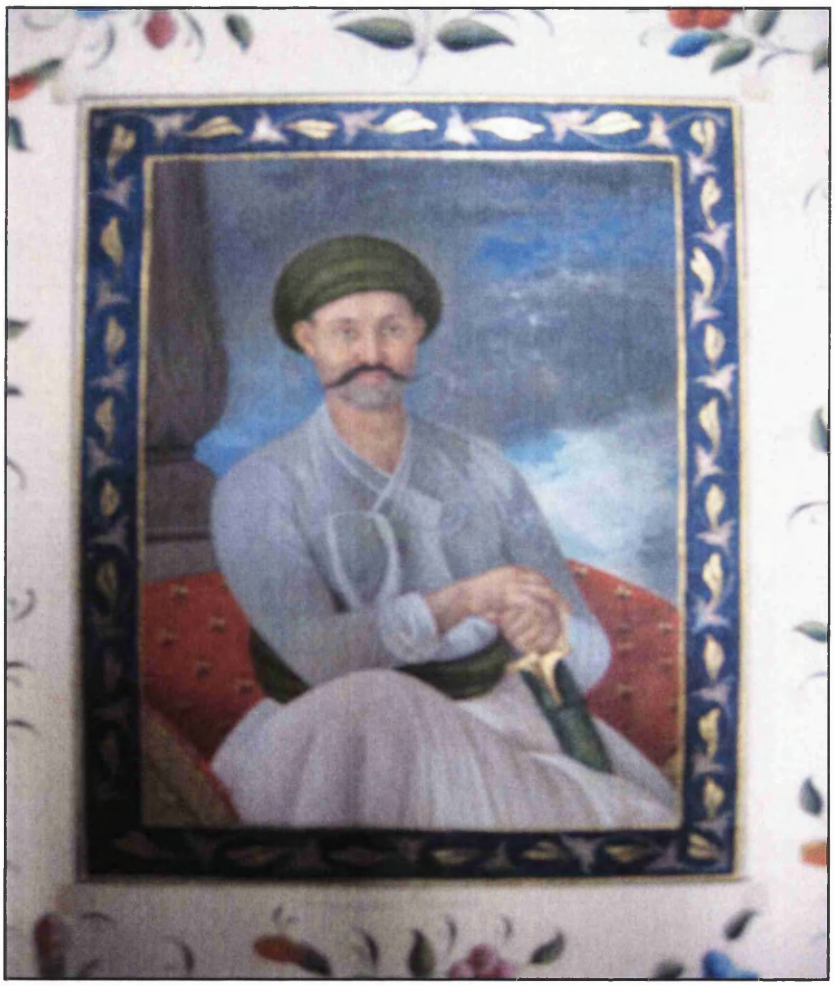

Figure 34 **Jawan Bakht. Lucknow, c. 1786.**

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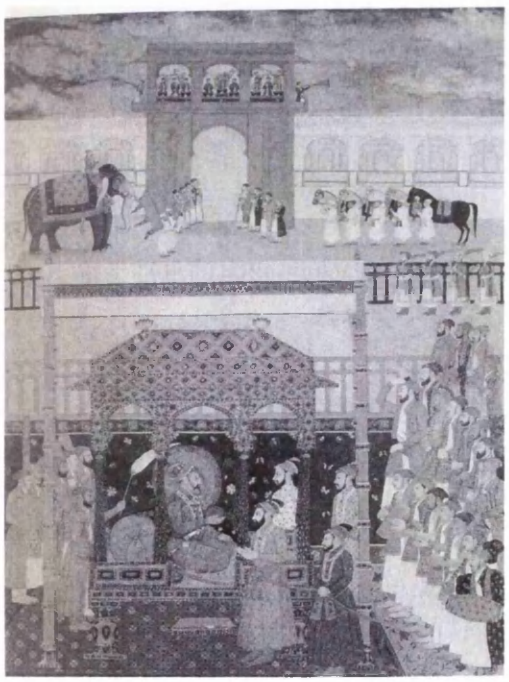

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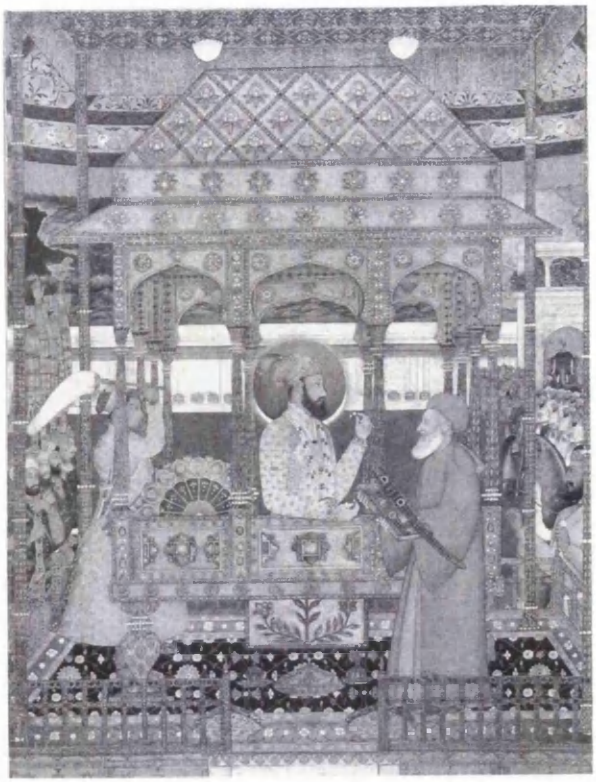

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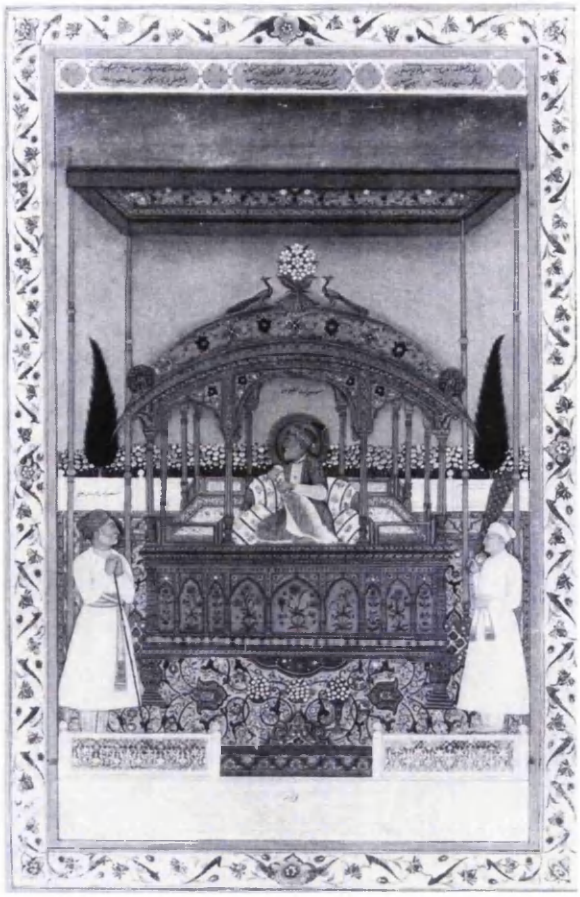

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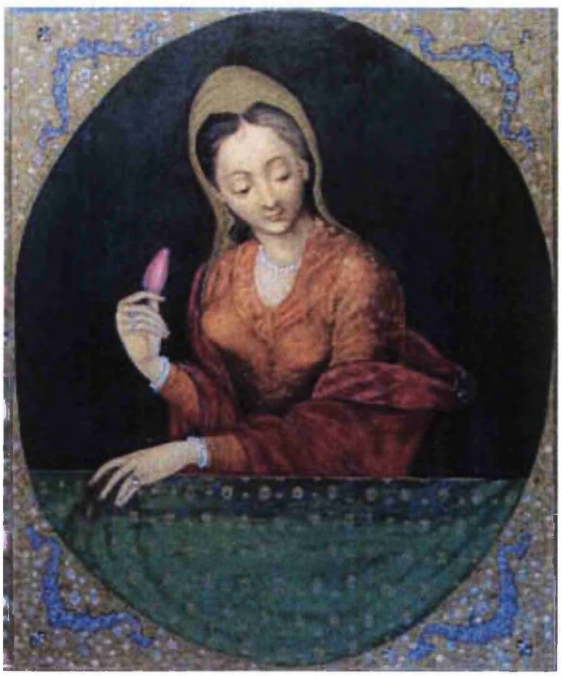

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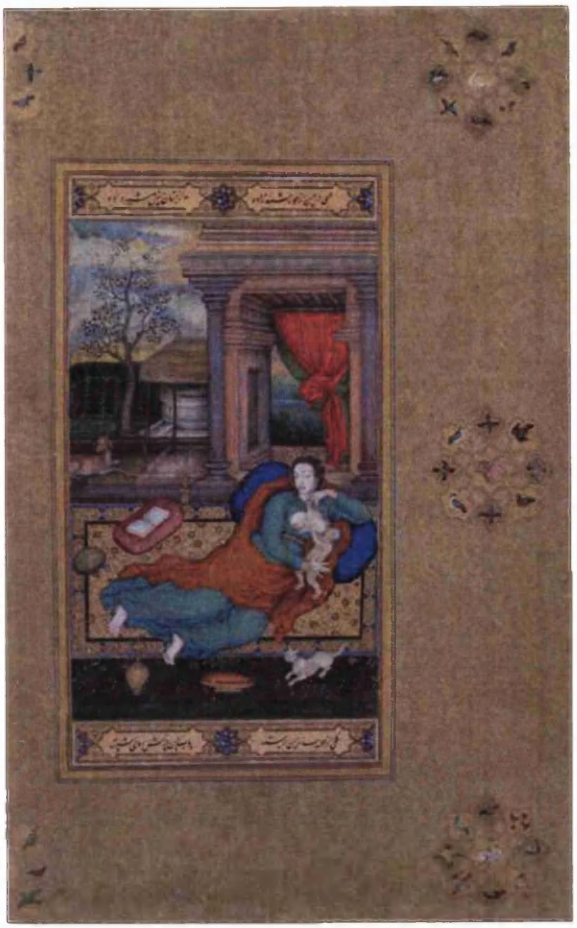

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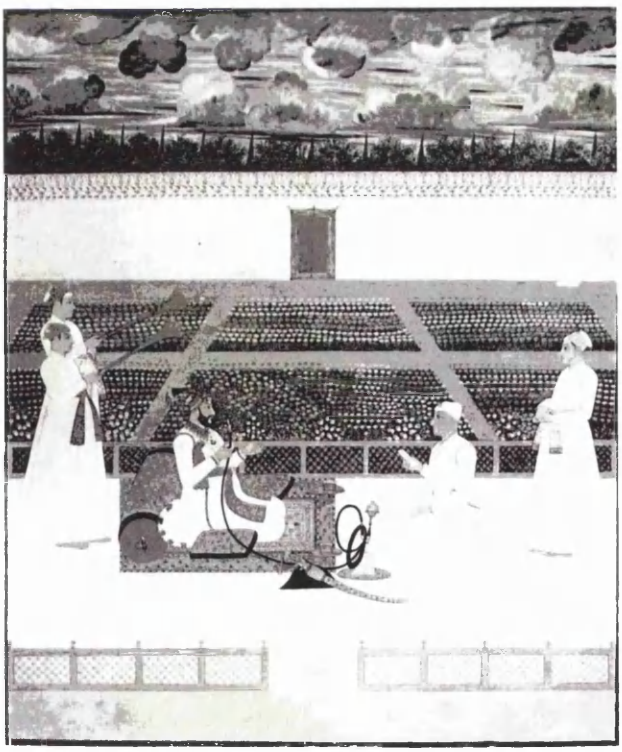

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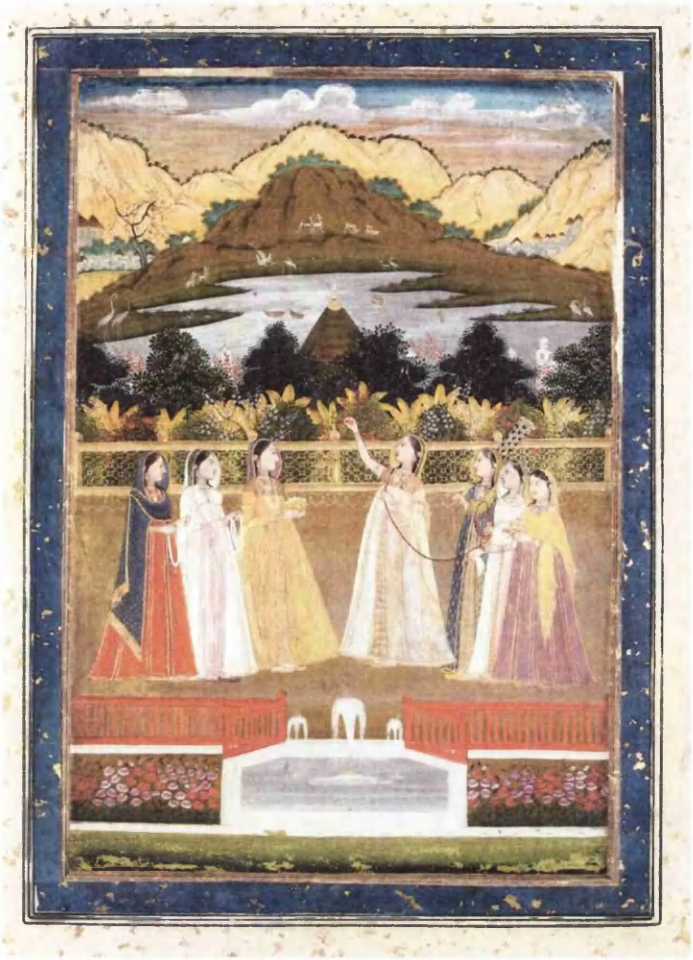

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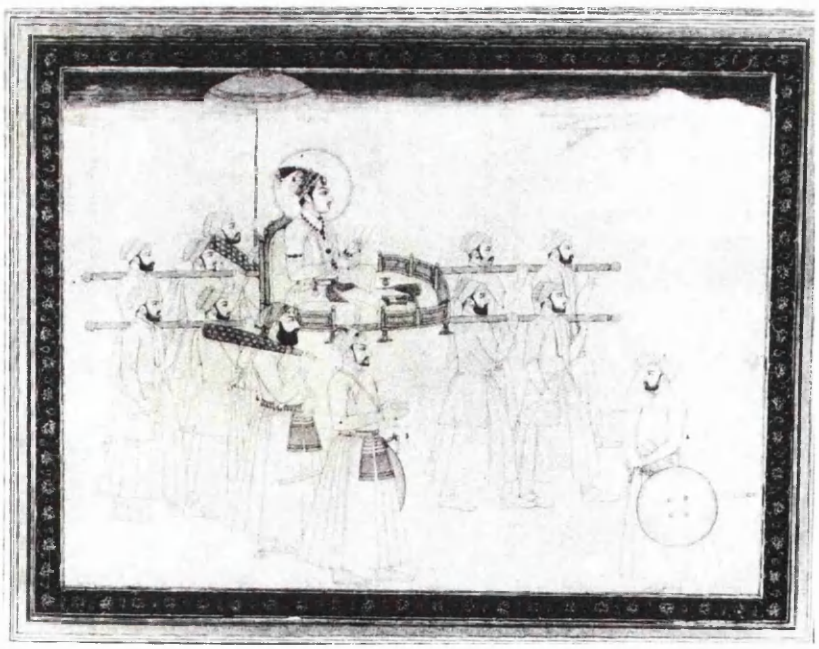
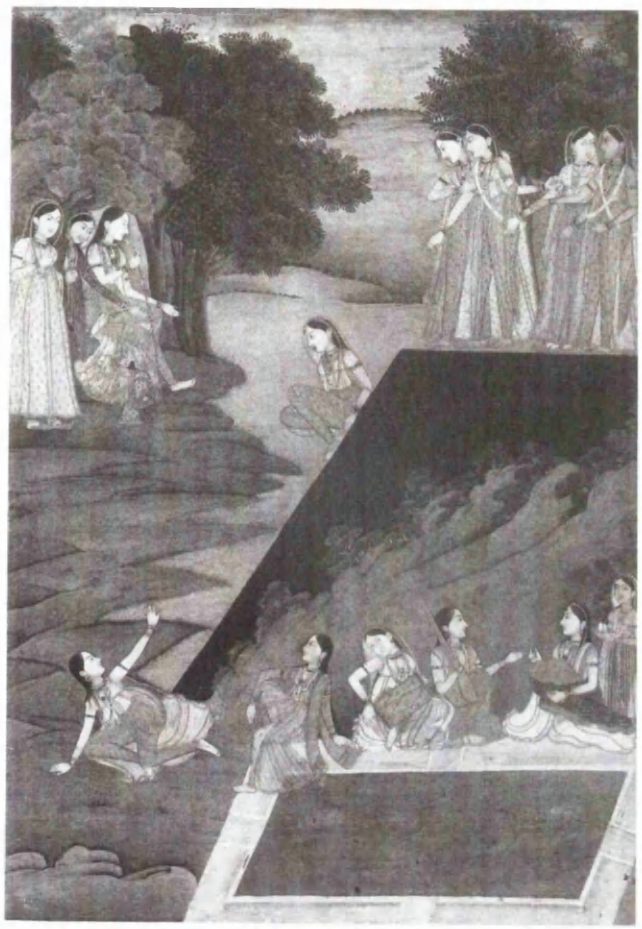


Figure 57 **'Muhammad Shah in a palanquin with attendants', by Muhammad Faquirullah Khan. Delhi, c. 1730-40.**



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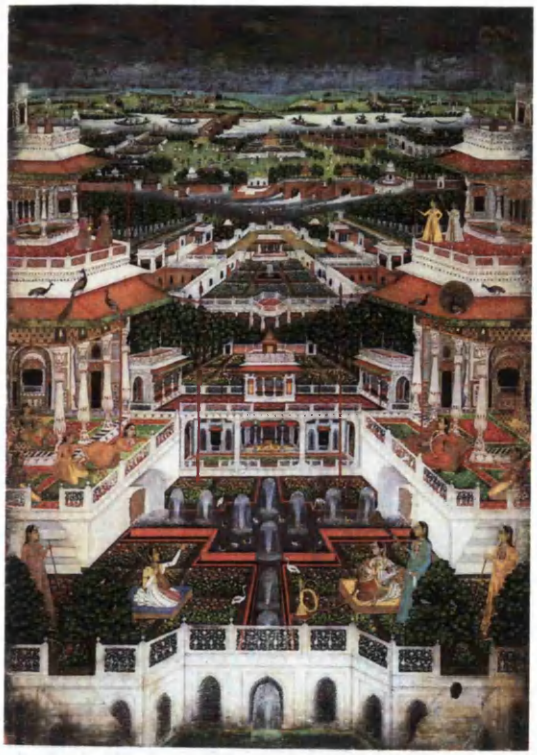

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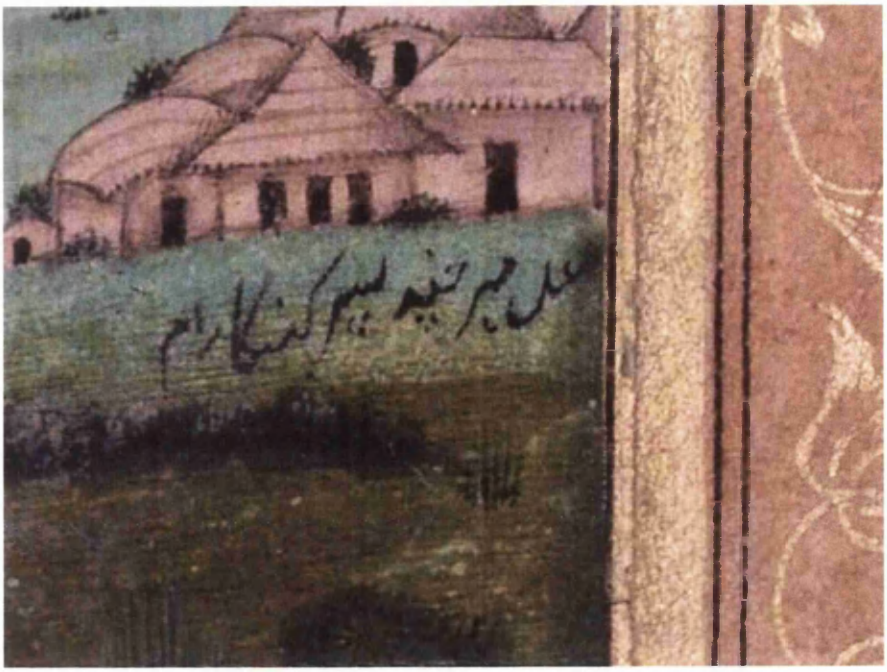

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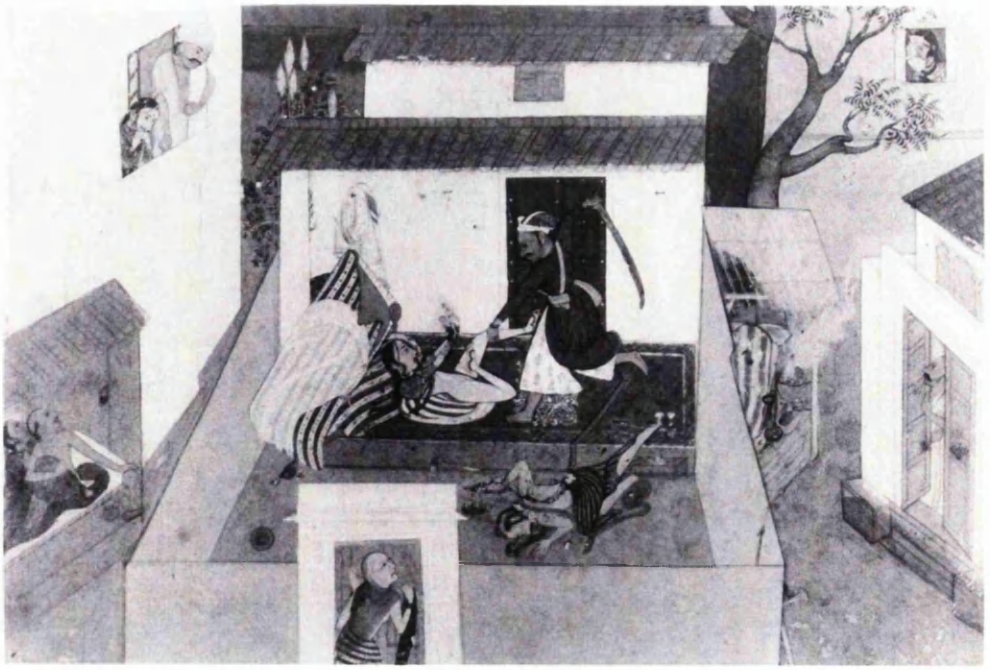

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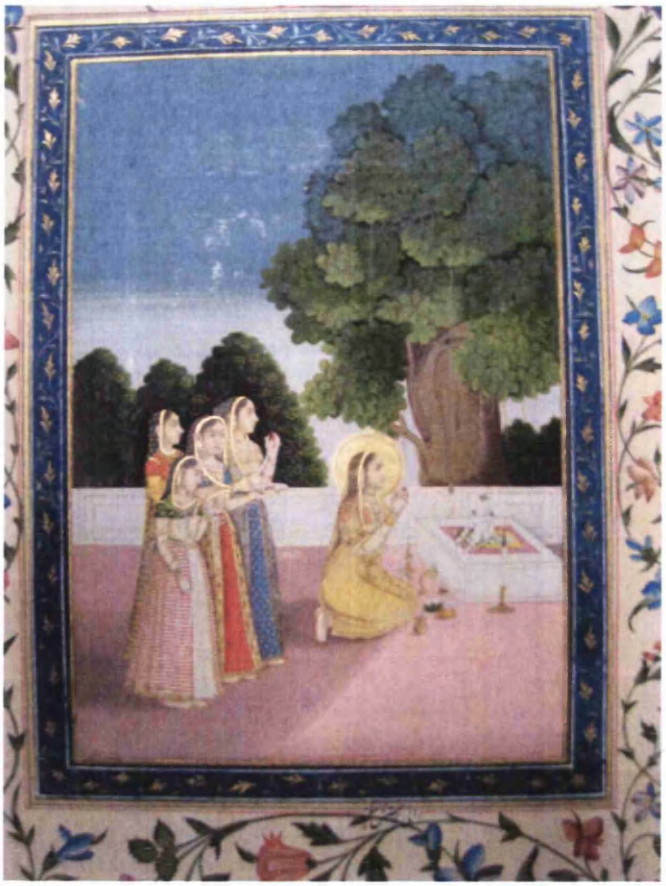

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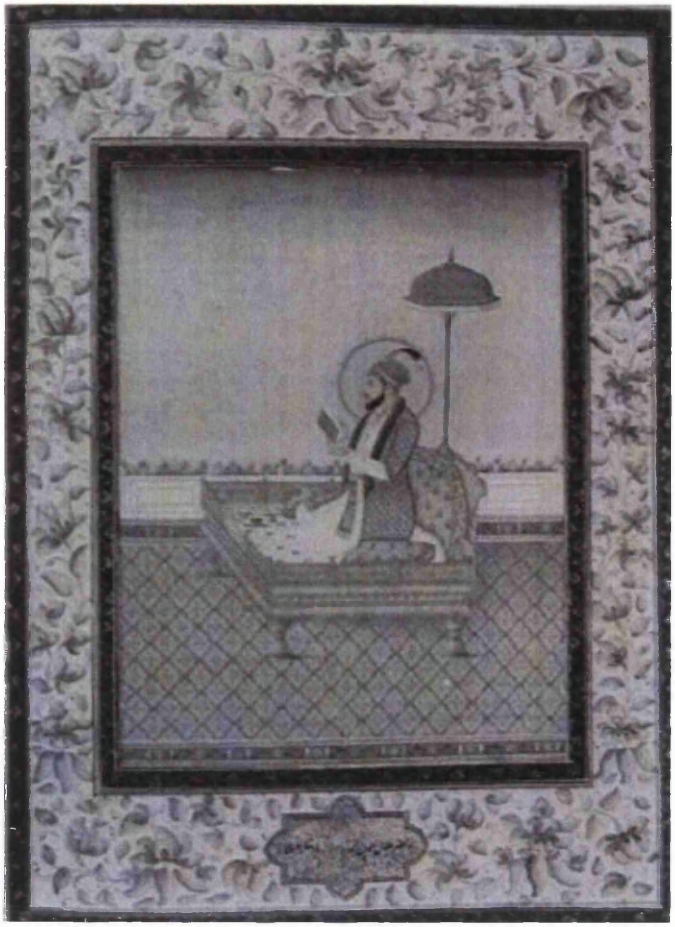

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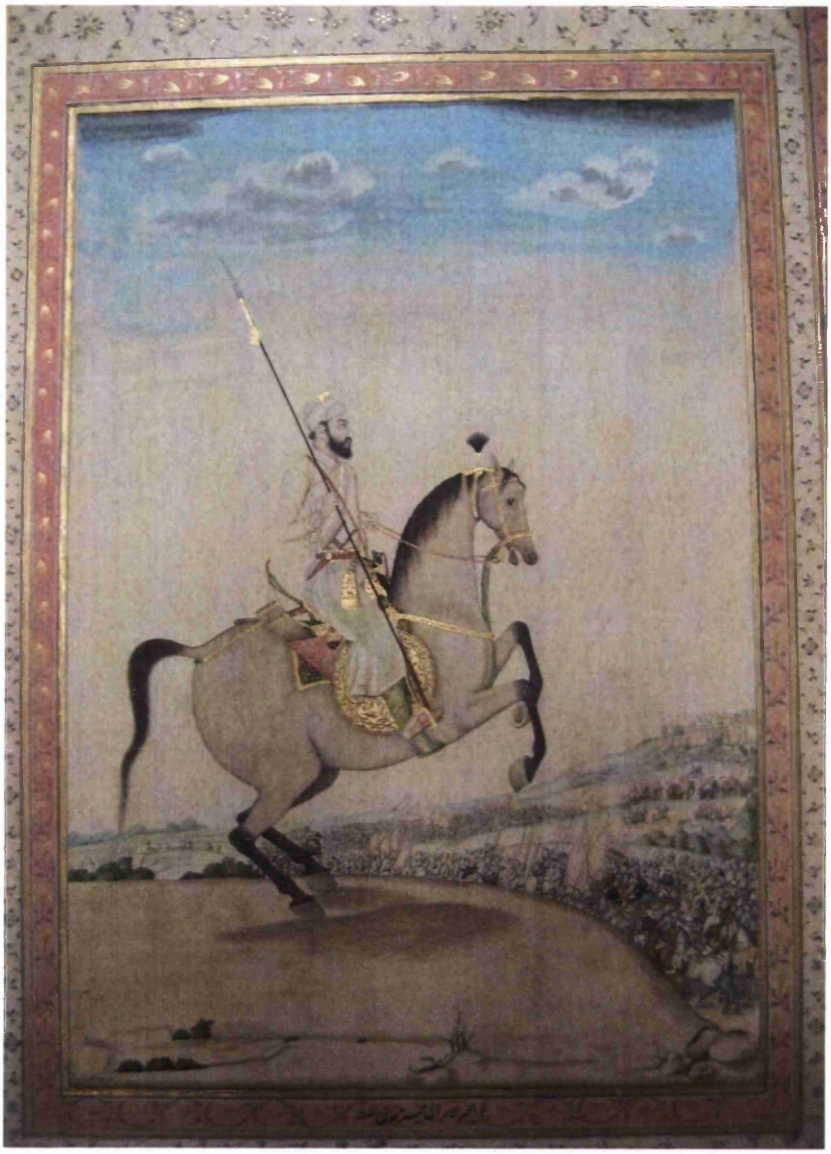

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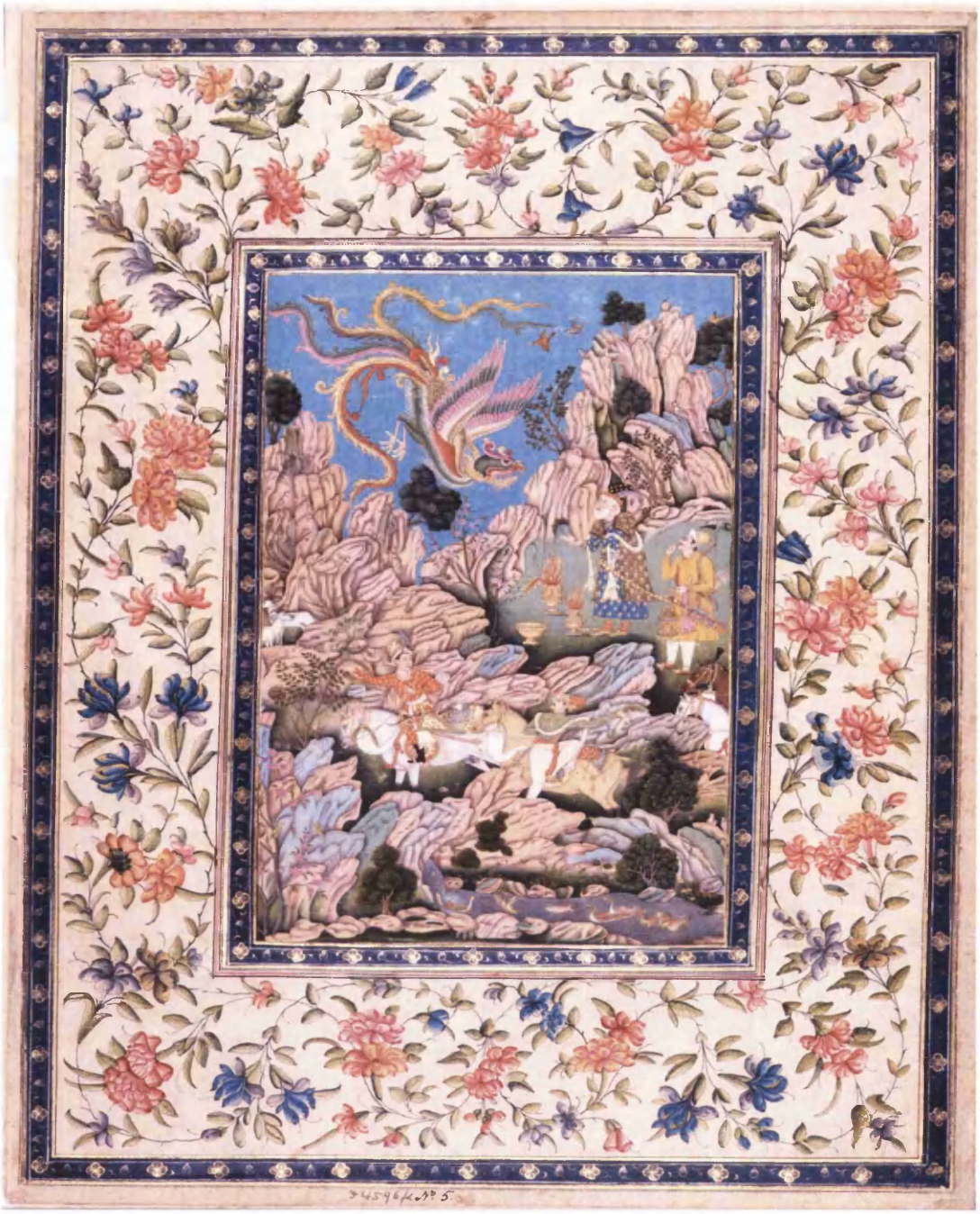

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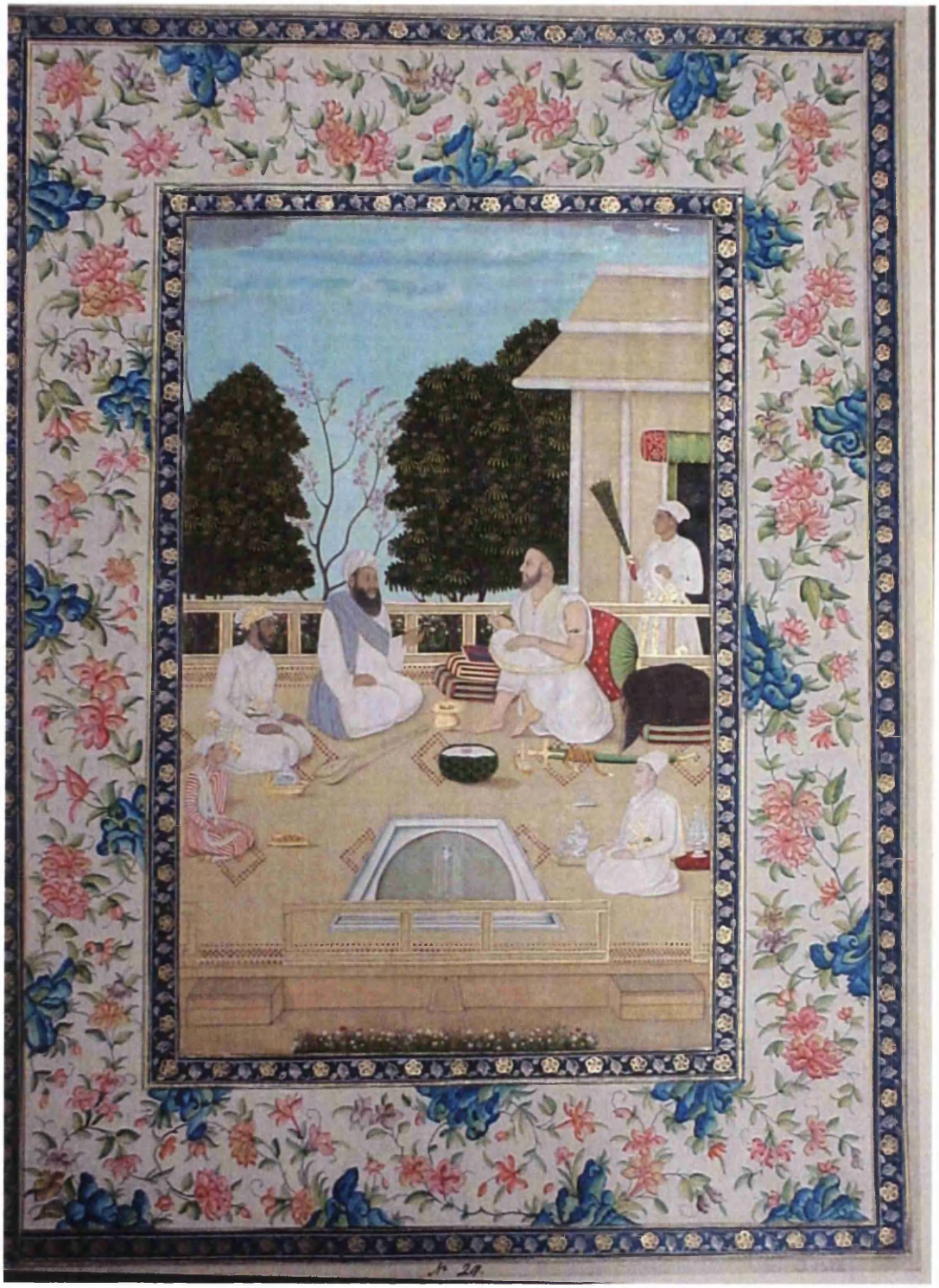


Figure 93 **'A prince meeting Sheikh Shir Muhammad Kawwal', by Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1765-73.**

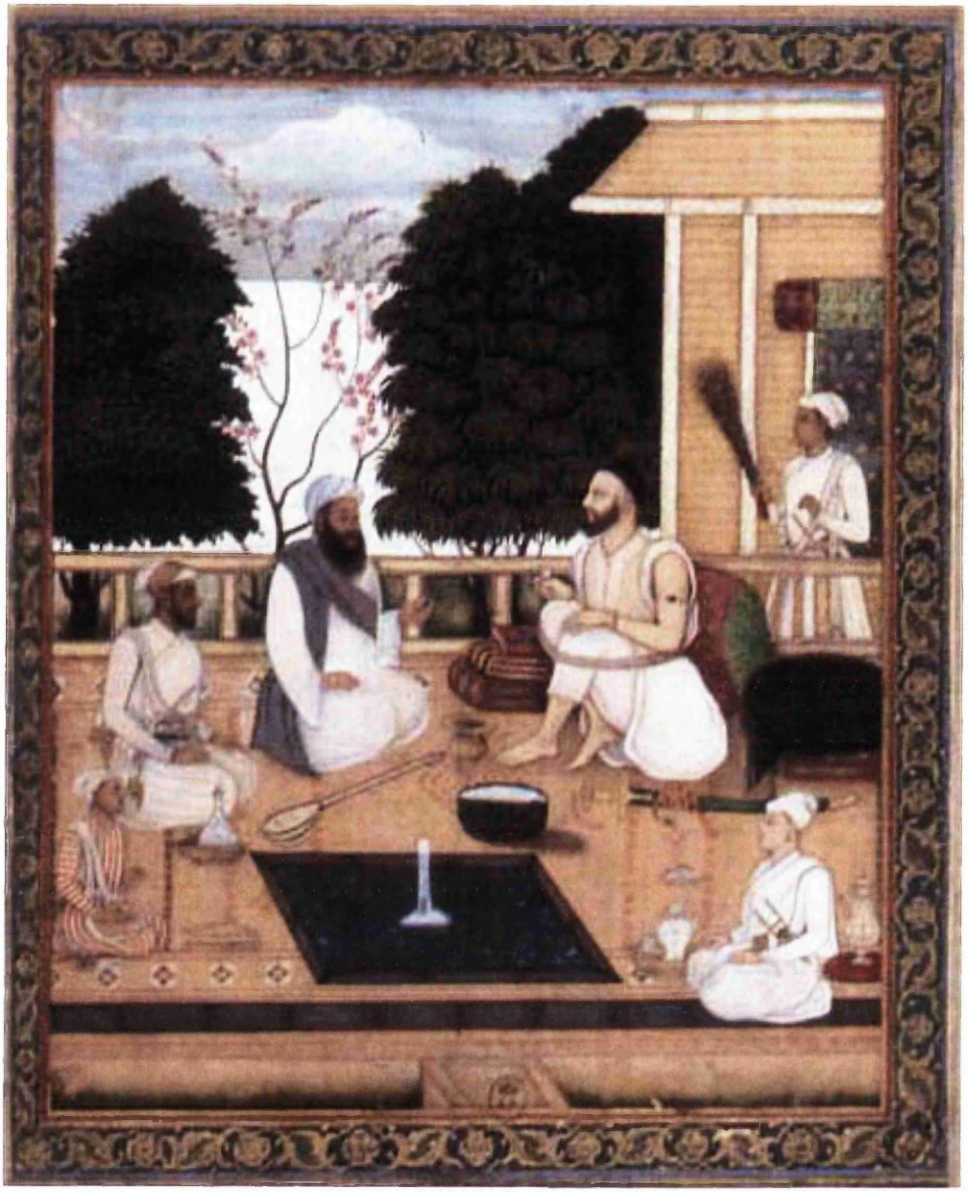
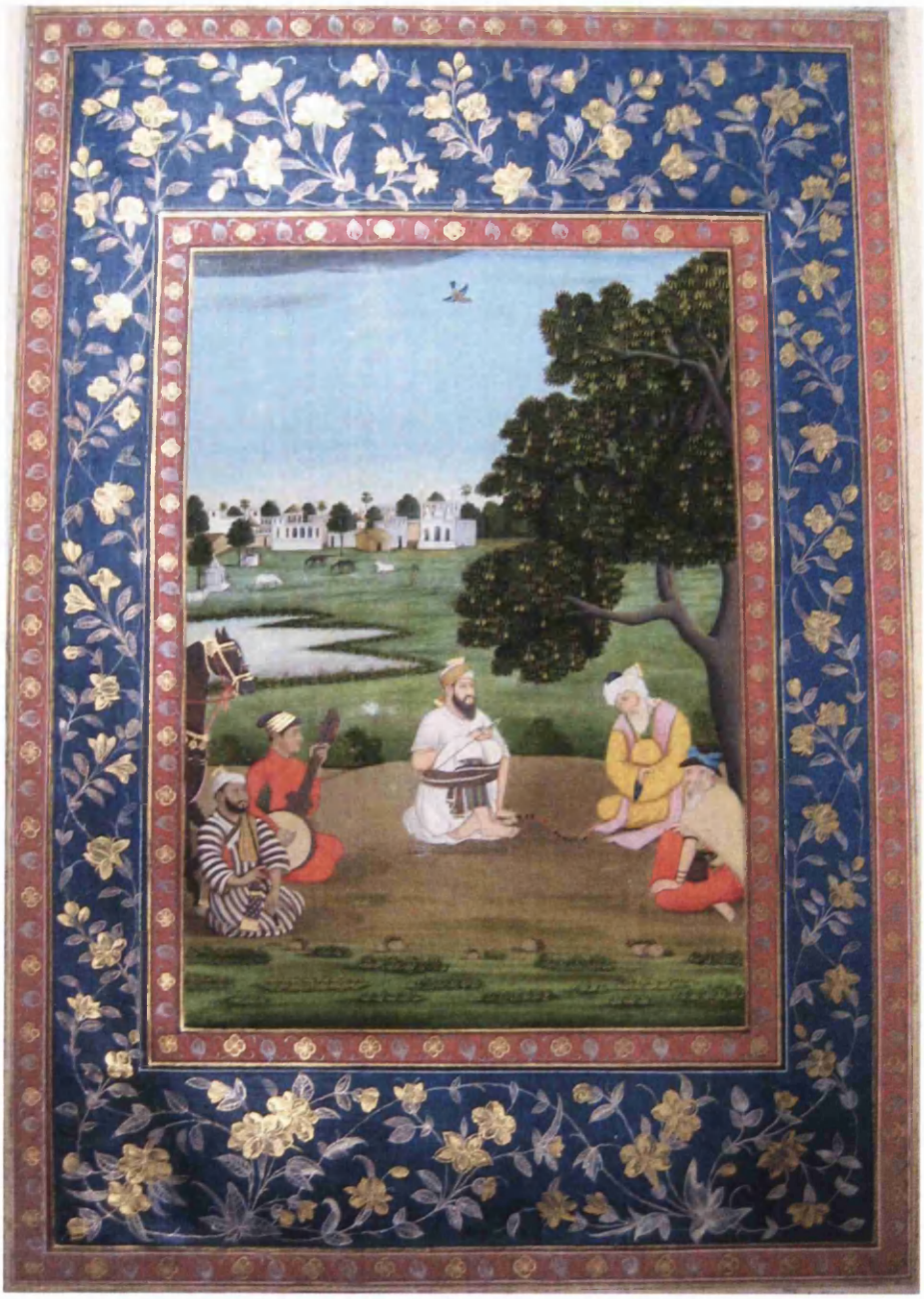


Figure 94 **'A prince meeting Sheikh Shir Muhammad Kawwal'. Mughal, 17th century.**



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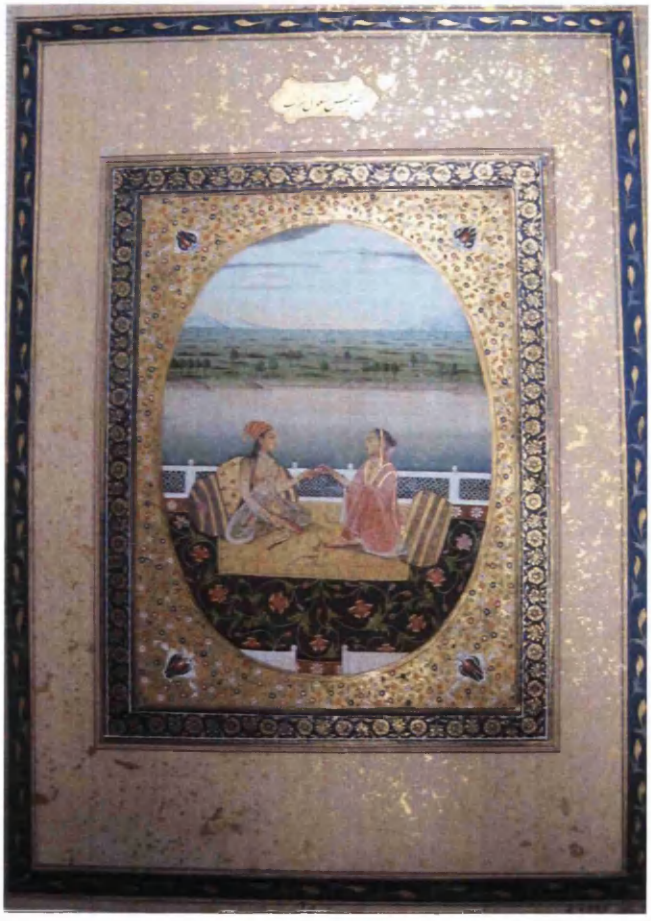

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Figure 100 **Shah Shuja.**
Mughal, 17th century with additions here attributed to Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1773-86.

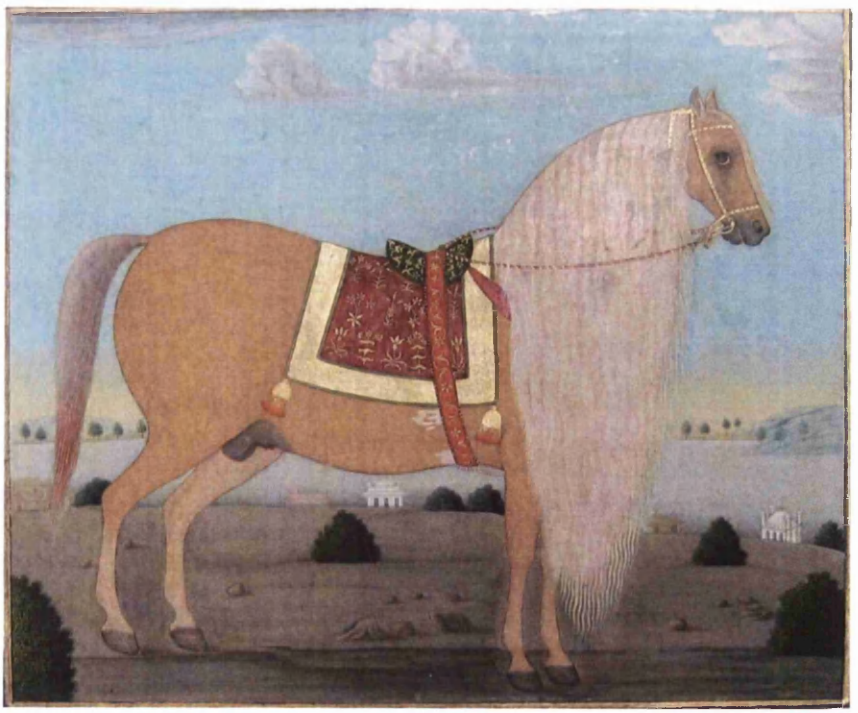

Figure 101 **Horse.**
Mughal 17th century with landscape additions here attributed to Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1773-86.

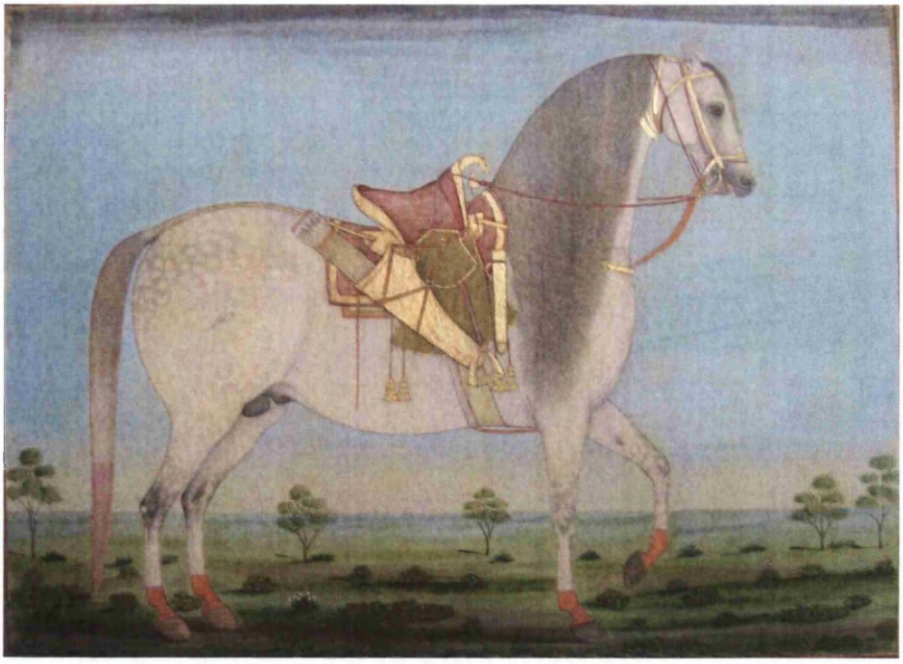

Figure 102 **Horse.**
Mughal 17th century with additions here attributed to Mihr Chand.
Faizabad, c. 1773-86.

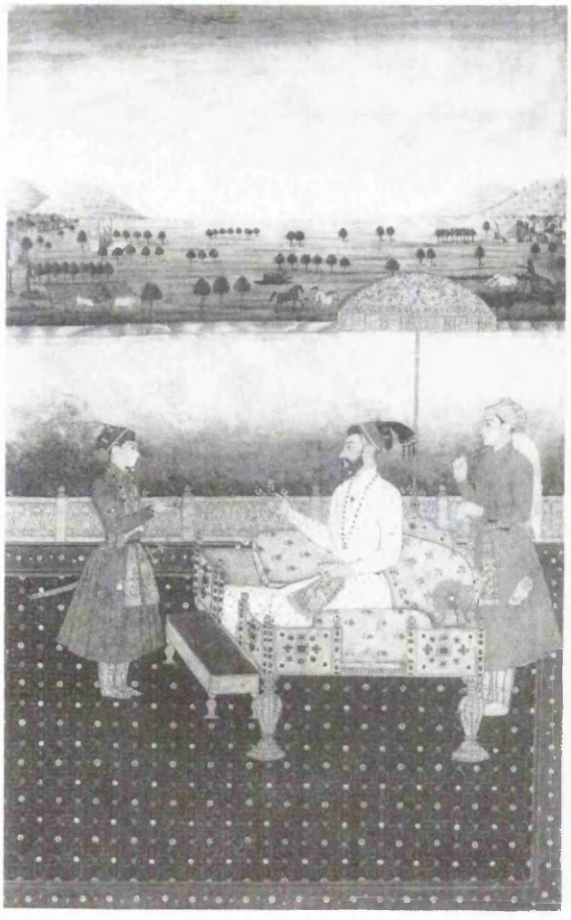

Figure 103 **'Aurangzeb receives a tray of jewels'. Mughal, c. 1660; with additions attributed to the studio of Mihr Chand.**

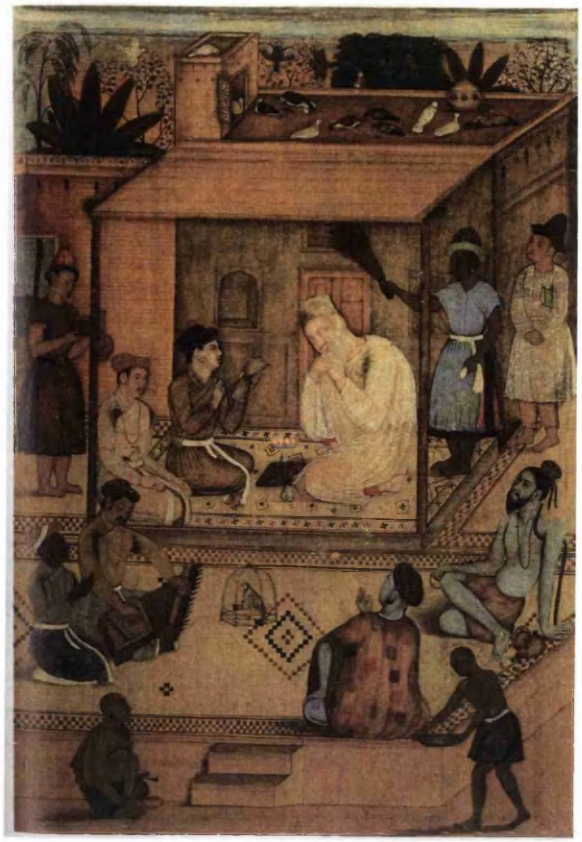

Figure 104 **'A prince visits an ashram', attributed to Bishan Das, c. 1600-05; foreground repainted c. 1800.**

Figure 105 **'Garden scene', by Mihr Chand. Faizabad or Delhi, c. 1776-86.**

Figure 106 **'Woodland scene', after an engraving by the Flemish painter Isaac Gillis van Coninxloo 1544-1607 or the Dutch painter Jacod Savery d. 1602. Mughal, c. 1605-27.**

Figure 107 **'Noble on an elephant and accompanied by attendants meets a person on foot', by Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1765-73.**

Figure 108 **'A prince celebrating the festival of Holi with the women of the harem', by Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1765-76.**

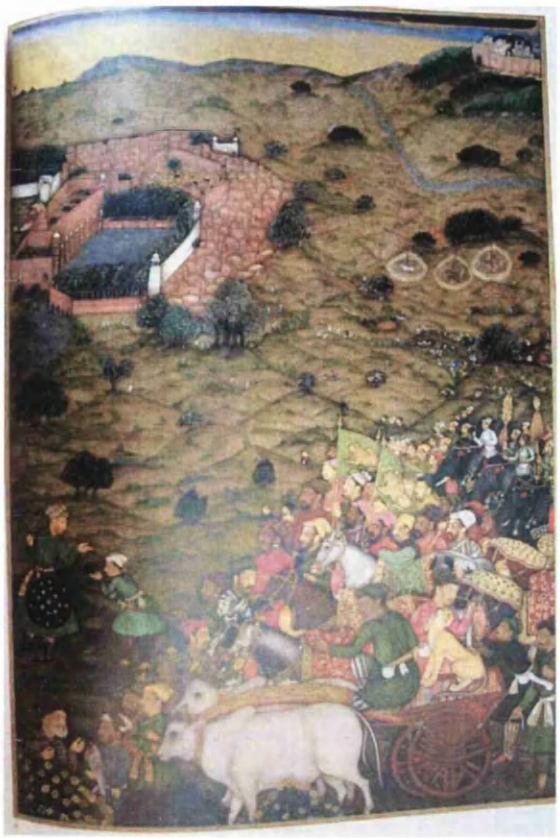

Figure 109 **'A royal procession', attributed to the 'Kashmiri painter.' Mughal, c. 1655.**

Figure 110 **'River landscape'. Murshidabad, c. 1750.**

Figure 111 **Mir Qasim Ali Khan, Nawab of Bengal. Attributed by J. Losty to Dip Chand. Murshidabad, c. 1763-64.**

Figure 112 **Alivardi Khan and Hadji Mahmud. Here attributed to Dip Chand. Murshidabad, c. 1760-70.**

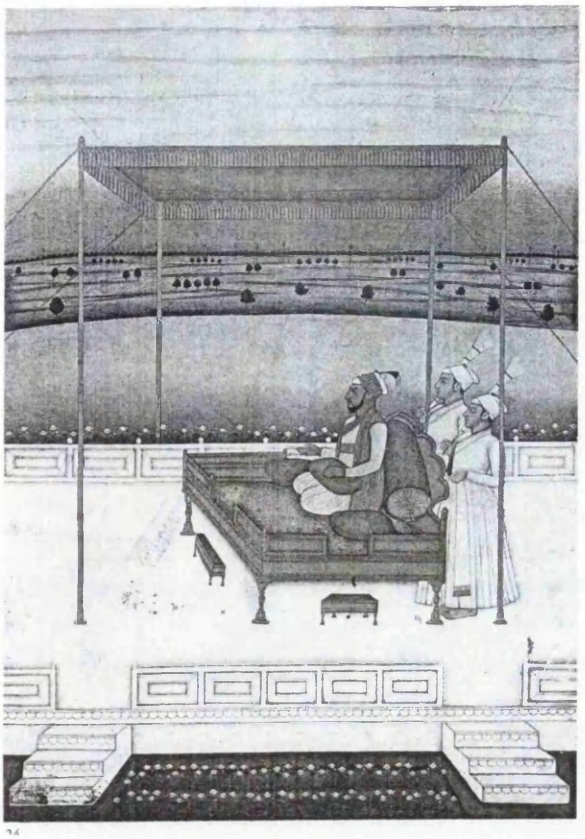

Figure 113 Shah Alam II, here attributed to Dip Chand. Patna, c. 1764.

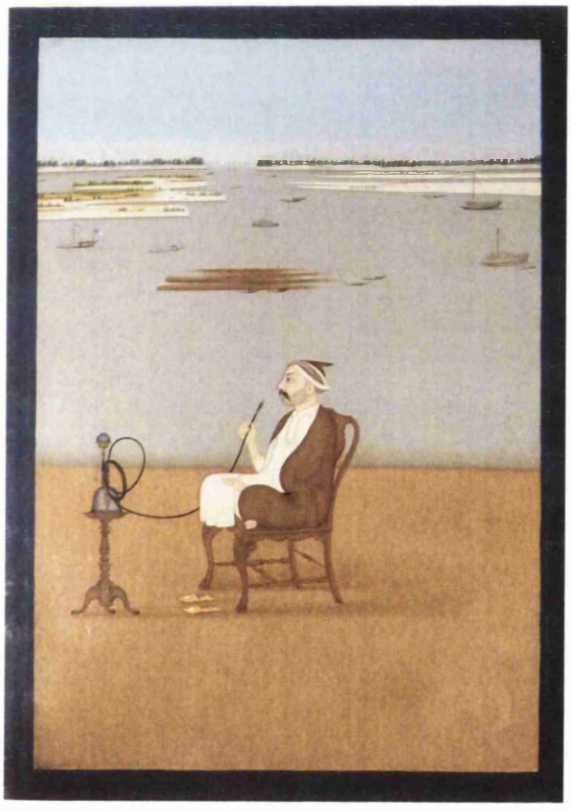

Figure 114 Asraf Ali Khan, attributed to Dip Chand. Patna, 1764.

Figure 115 **'Muhammad Shah entertained by musicians and dancers'. Murshidabad or Patna, c. 1770.**

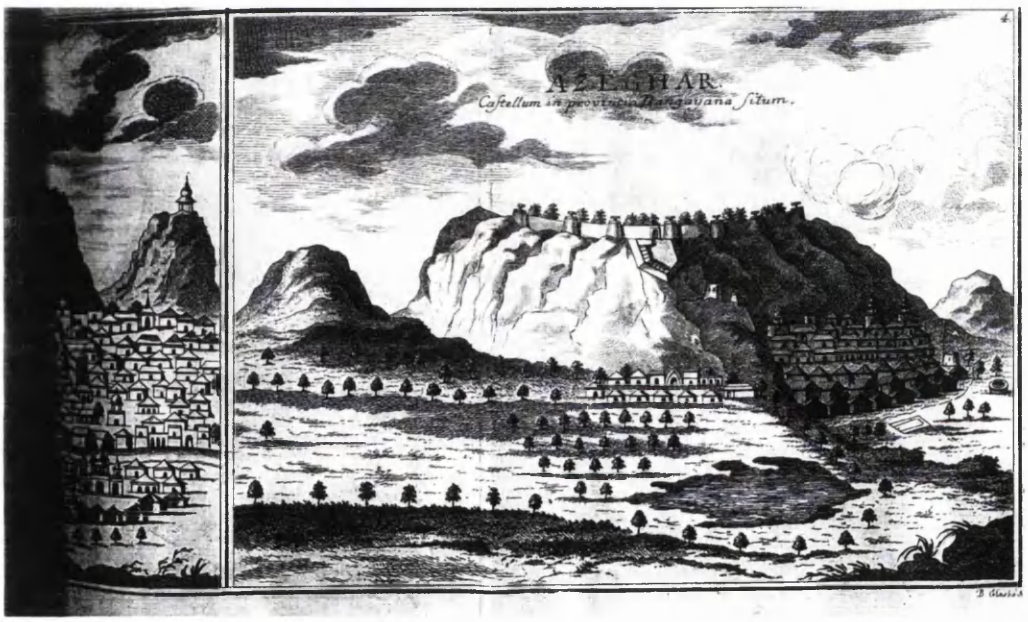

Figure 116 **'Azeghar', by Tieffenthaler. India, c. 1760-65.**

Figure 117 **'Nilgau', by Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1765-73.**

Figure 118 **Humayun, by Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1765-73.**

Figure 119 **'Gajendra-moksha, Vishnu rescuing the elephant', by Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1770.**

Figure 120 **'Vishnu and Lakshmi with Garuda', by Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1765-76. MIK, I 4595 folio 35r.**

Figure 121 **'An elephant tethered to a tree', attributed to Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1765-76.**

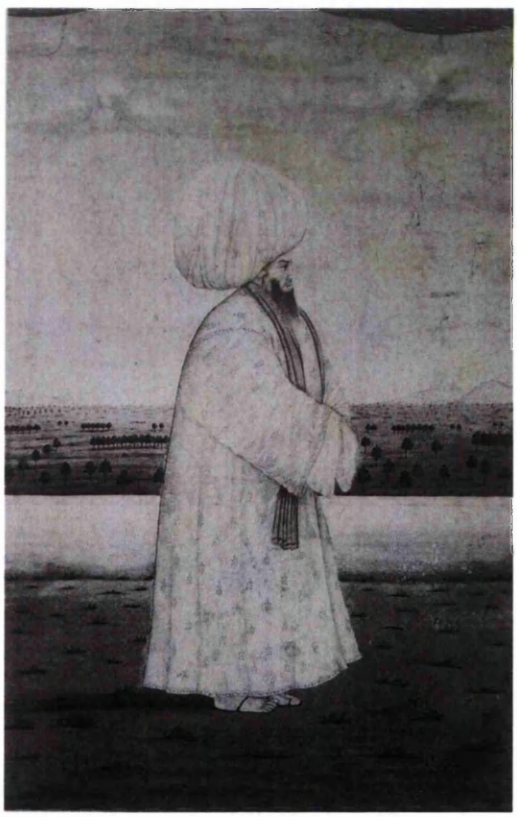

Figure 122 **'Turkish Mullah', here attributed to Mihr Chand (instead of Bahadur Singh). Faizabad, c. 1765-76.**

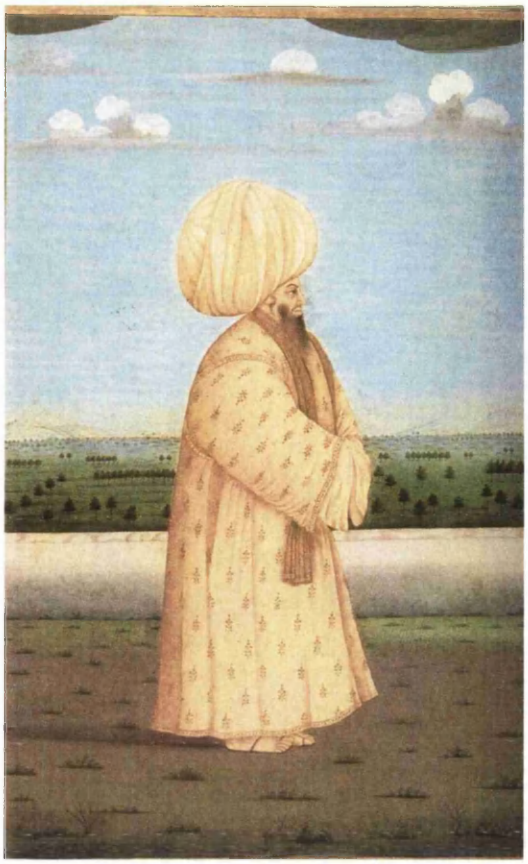

Figure 123 **'A Mufti standing in a landscape', here attributed to Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1765-76.**

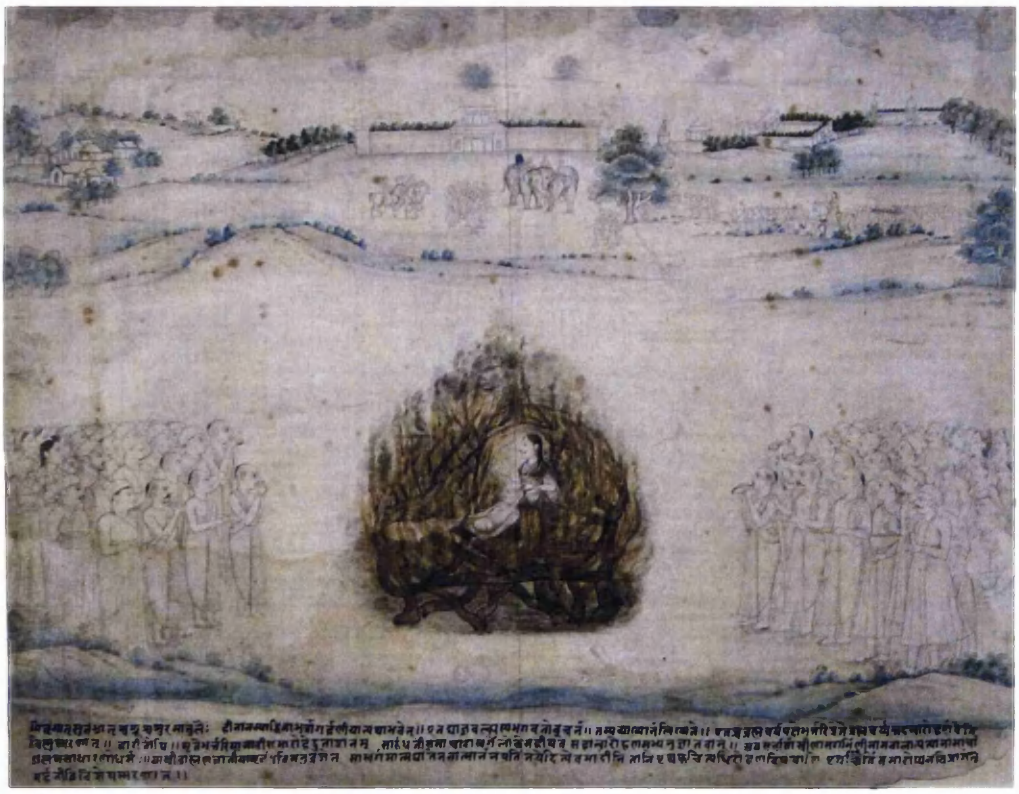

Figure 124 **'The rite of sati', by Bahadur Singh. Lucknow, c. 1780.**

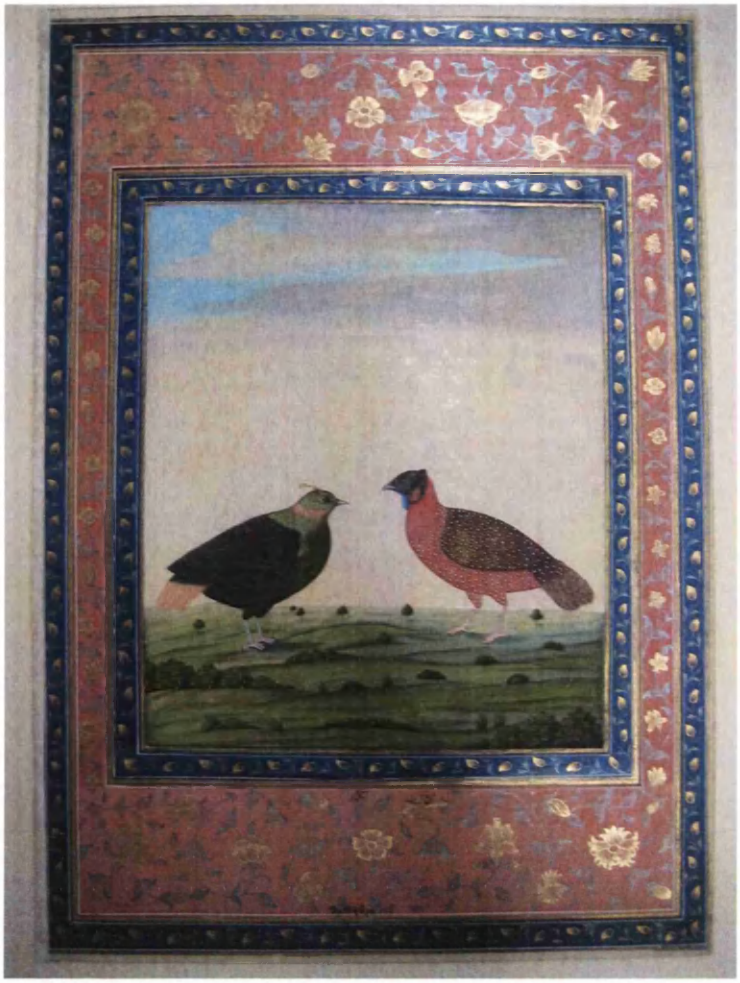

Figure 125 **'A pair of birds in a landscape'.**
Faizabad or Lucknow, c. 1776-86.

Figure 126 **A bird.**
Lucknow, c. 1775-85.

Figure 127 Zain Khan Koka.
Mughal, c. 1595.

Figure 128 'Akbar in old age', by Manohar.
Mughal, c. 1604.

Figure 129 **'Emperor Jahangir receiving his two sons', by Manohar. Mughal, c.1605-06.**

Figure 130 **'Jahangir embracing Shah Abbas I', by Abu'l Hasan. Mughal, c. 1615.**

Figure 131 **'Jahangir preferring a Sufi Shaikh to Kings', by Bichitr. Mughal, 1615-18.**

Figure 132 **'Darbar of Jahangir', by Abu'l Hasan. Mughal, c. 1615-16.**

Figure 133 **'Timur handing the imperial crown to Babur in the presence of Humayun', by Govardhan. Mughal, c. 1635.**

Figure 134 **'Timur enthroned with descendants: Babur, Humayun, Akbar and Shah Jahan, with the poet Sa'di on the left and an attendant on the right', by Hashim. Mughal, c.1650.**

Figure 135 **Jahangir.**
Mughal, 17th century.

Figure 136 **'Darbar of Jahangir', by Manohar.**
Mughal, c. 1620.

Figure 137 **'Shah Jahan examines the royal seal', by Abu'l Hasan. Mughal, 1628.**

Figure 138 **'Shah Jahan and his son riding with an escort', by Manohar. Mughal, c. 1618-20.**

Figure 139 **'The king of Persia, Shah Abbas I'. Mughal, 17th century.**

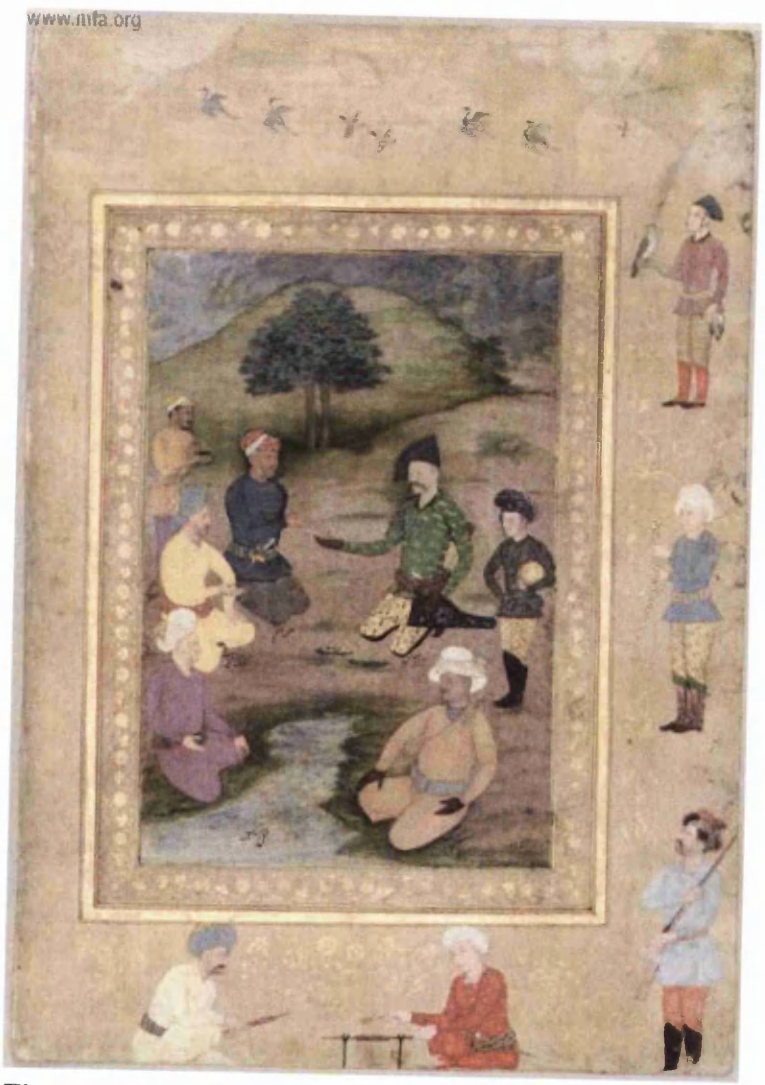

Figure 140 **'Khan Alam, ambassador of Jahangir, with Shah Abbas in a landscape', attributed to Bishan Das. Mughal, c. 1650.**

Figure 141 **Humayun.**
Murshidabad, c. 1785-90.

Figure 142 **'Portrait de Babur'. Mughal, late 17th or early 18th century.**

Figure 143 **'Zahiru'd-din Muhammad Babur Badshah Ghazi' here attributed to Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1776-86.**

Figure 144 **Portrait of Nawab Mirza Muhammad Baquir, incorrectly entitled as Babur, here attributed to Mihr Chand or his workshop. Faizabad, c. 1776-86.**

Figure 145 Nawab Mirza Muhammad Baquir and his son Mirza Husayn, by Mu'in Musavvir. Safavid, 1674.

Figure 146 Mir Jafar, Nawab of Bengal, here attributed to Mihr Chand. Lucknow, c. 1760.

Figure 147 **'Courtier in a winter dress'. Mughal, mid-17th century.**

Figure 148 **'Abu'l-muzaffar Mu'inu'd-din Muhammad Farrukhsiyar', by Mihr Chand. Lucknow, c. 1776.**

Figure 149 An unidentified Awadhi lady, here attributed to Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1776-86.

Figure 150 Portrait of a Mughal lady, by Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1776-86.

Figure 151 **'Shah Jahan enthroned', by Abu'l Hasan. Mughal, c. 1620.**

Figure 152 **'The royal chamber in the public audience hall in the middle of the Yazdeh Darreh, with the ruler, Alam Bahadur Badshah and the great commanders.' Delhi or Awadh, c. 1776-86.**

Figure 153 Zabita Khan, Amir ul-Umra, by Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1772.

Figure 154 'Dancing girl', by Tilly Kettle. Faizabad, 1772.

Figure 155 **'Shuja ud-Daula, Nawab of Oudh, and four sons with General Barker and military officers', by Tilly Kettle. Faizabad, 1772.**

Figure 156 **'Nawab Shuja ud-Daula, Nawab of Oudh, holding a bow', by Tilly Kettle. Faizabad, 1772.**

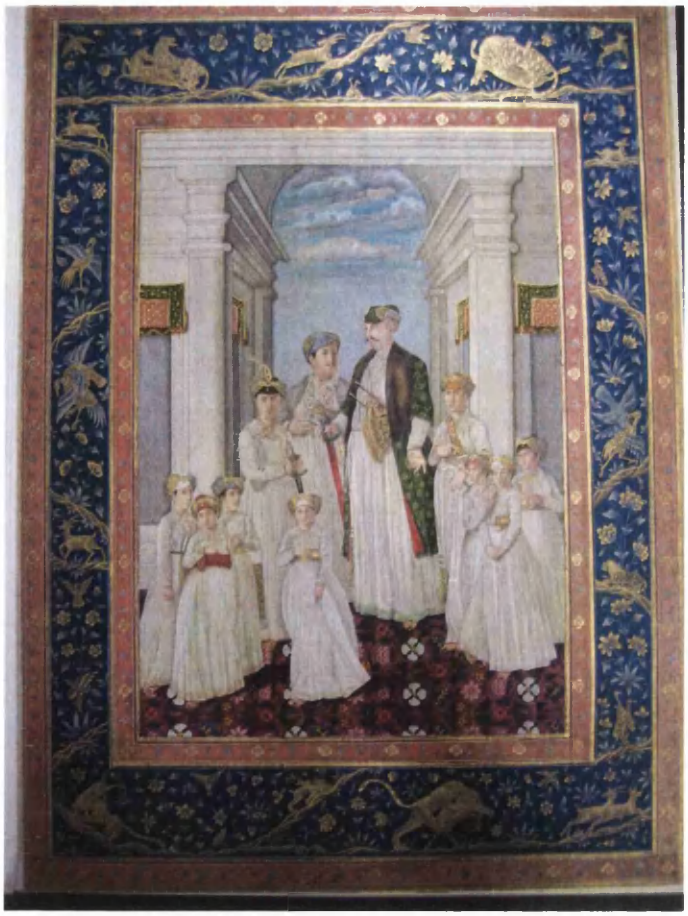

Figure 157 **'Nawab Shuja ud-Daula and his ten sons', by Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1773-74.**

Figure 158 **'Shuja ud Daula and his sons', drawn by P. Renault, engraved by E. Renault, after the miniature painting by Nevasi Lal in the Gentil Collection which is a copy Tilly Kettle's lost original.**

Figure 159 Nawab Shuja ud-Daula holding a bow with attendants and an elephant in the background, by Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1773-74.

Figure 160 'Full length portrait of Nawab Shuja ud-Daula holding a bow with attendants and an elephant in the background', here attributed to Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1776-86.

Figure 161 **'Full length portrait of Nawab Shuja ud-Daula holding a bow with attendants and an elephant in the background', by Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1773-74.**

Figure 162 **'Full length portrait of Nawab Shuja ud-Daula holding a bow with attendants and a horse in the background', here attributed to Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1773-74.**

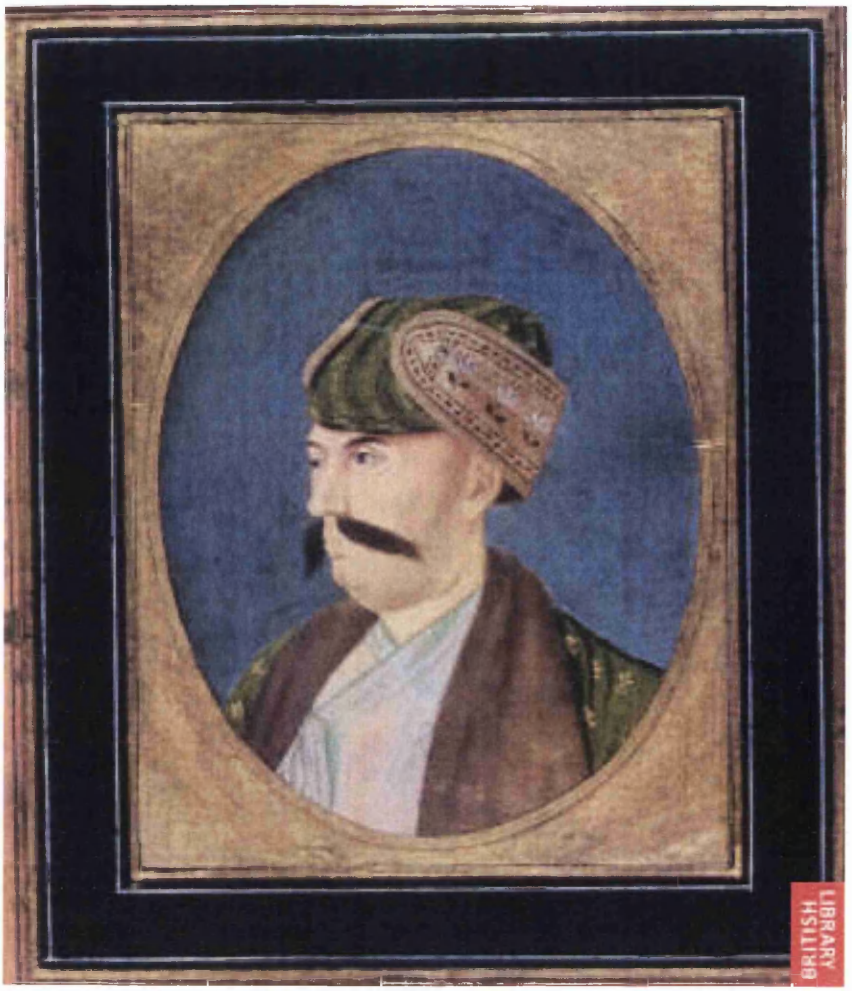

Figure 163 **'Head and shoulder portrait of Shuja ud-Daula', attributed to Mihr Chand. Faizabad, 1773-74.**

Figure 164 **Shuja ud-Daula, attributed to Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1773-74.**

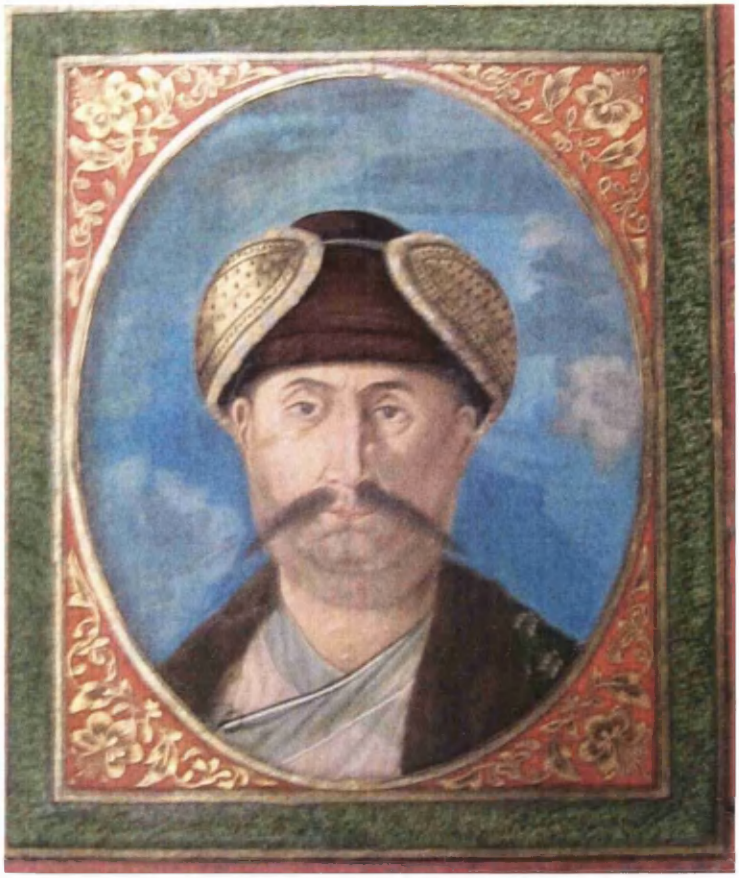

Figure 165 Shuja ud-Daula, by Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1773-74.

Figure 166 'An imaginary courtesan', by Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1760-65.

Figure 167 **Portrait of a courtesan.**
Mughal, 18th century.

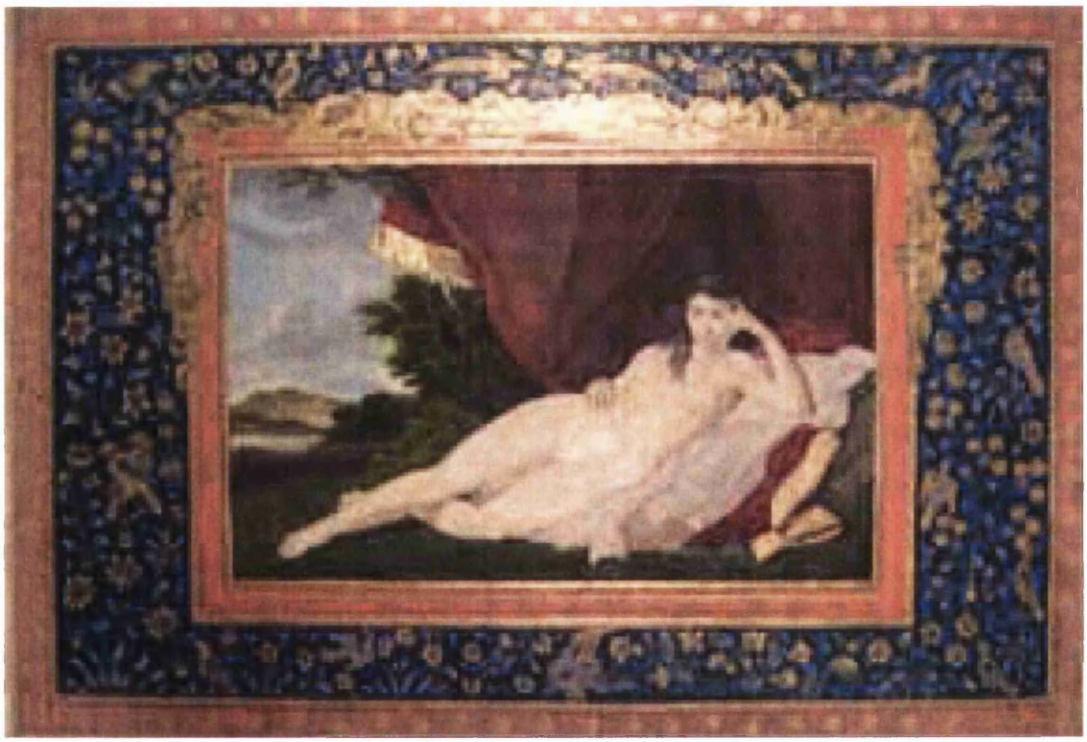

Figure 168 **'Venus', by Mihr Chand.**
Faizabad, c. 1776-86.

Figure 169 **'Venus', by Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1776-86.**

Figure 170 **'Venus and the lute player', by Titian. Italy, c. 1565-70.**

Figure 171 **'Venus', after Titian. Engraving by John Boydell, 1781.**

Figure 172 **Portrait of an unidentified woman, attributed by Sven Gahlin to Mihr Chand. Lucknow, c. 1773.**

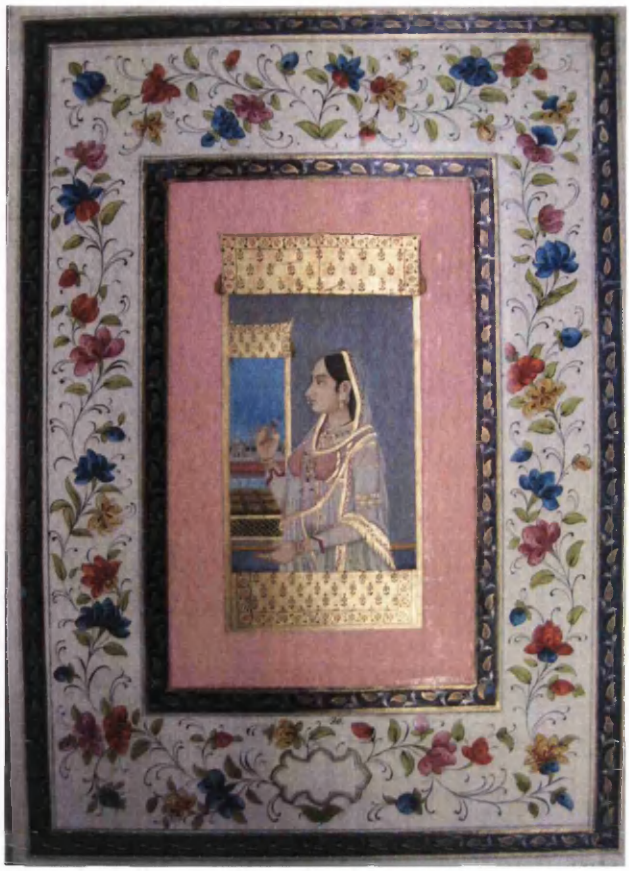

Figure 173 **'A portrait of a lady smelling a flower', here attributed to Mihr Chand. Faizabad or Delhi, c. 1776-86.**

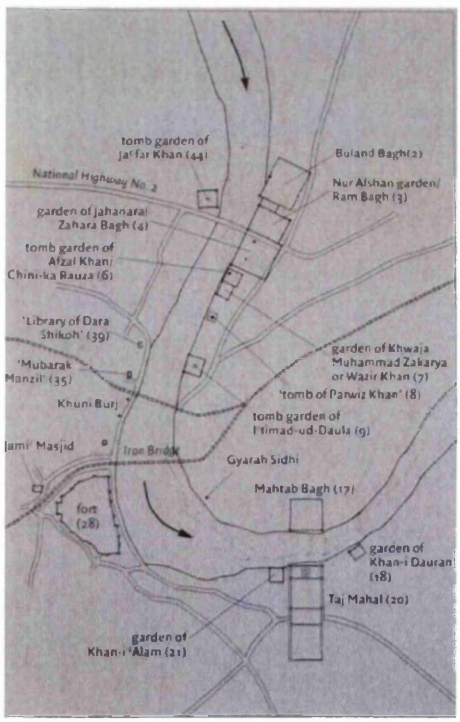

Figure 174 **Plan of the Taj Mahal complex. (Koch, 2007)**

Figure 175 **'A mine explodes in 1597 during the siege of Chitor, killing many of the Mughal forces', by Miskina with Bhura. Mughal, c. 1590-95.**

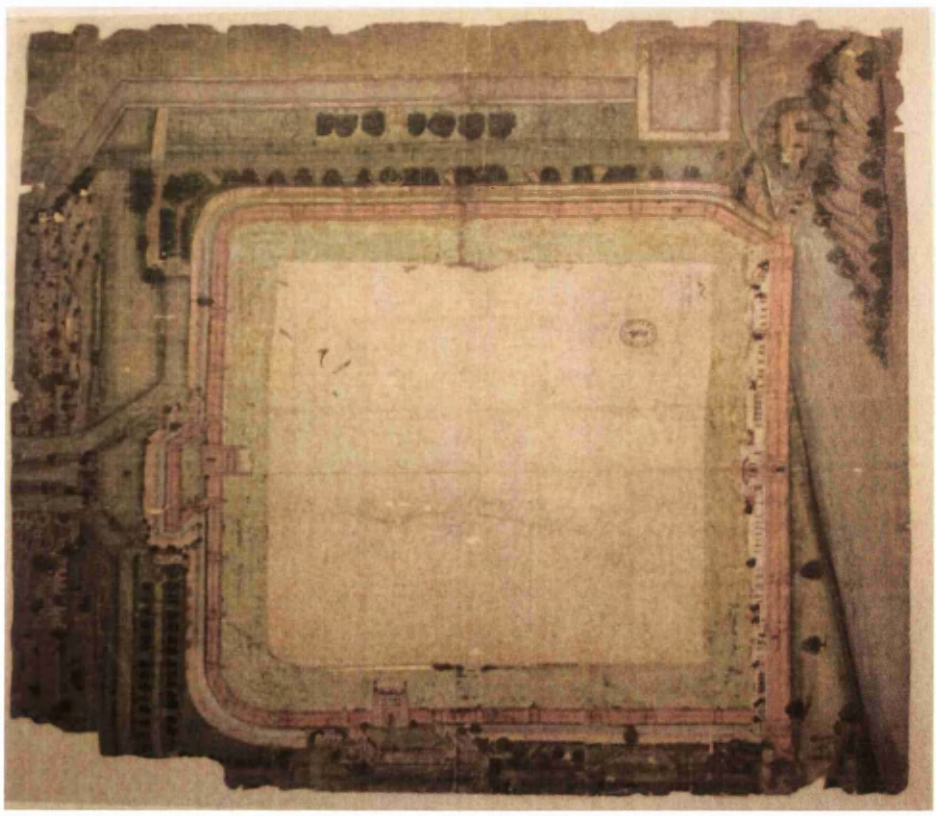

Figure 176 **Plan of the Red Fort, Delhi by Nidha Mal. Delhi, c. 1750.**

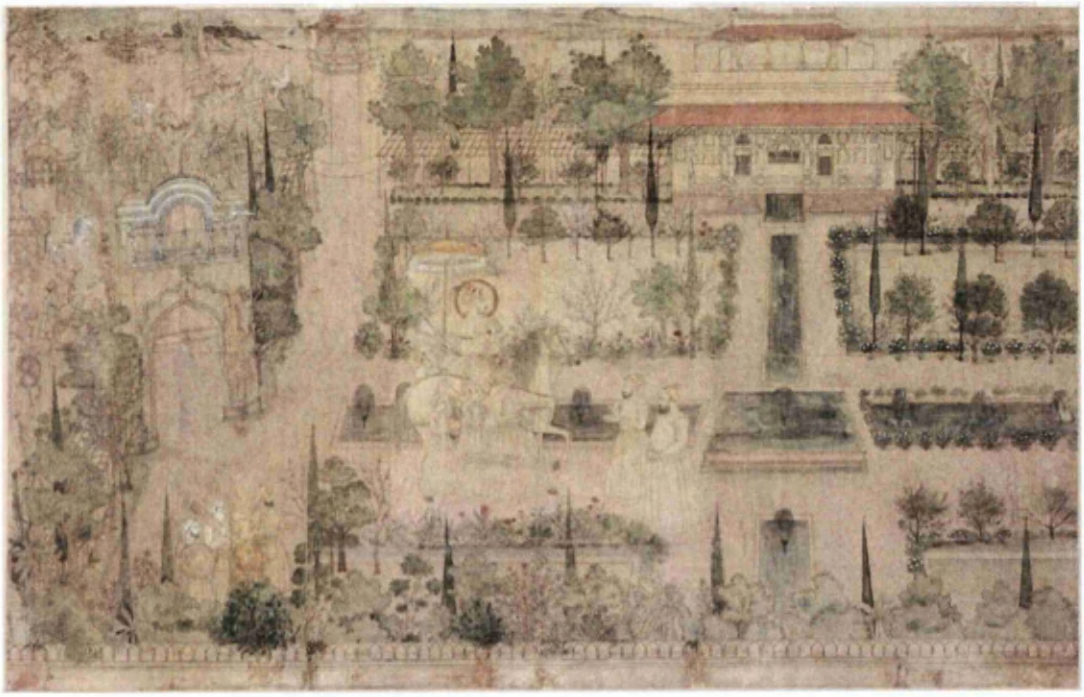

Figure 177 **'Muhammad Shah in a garden', by Nidha Mal. Delhi, here dated to c. 1750.**

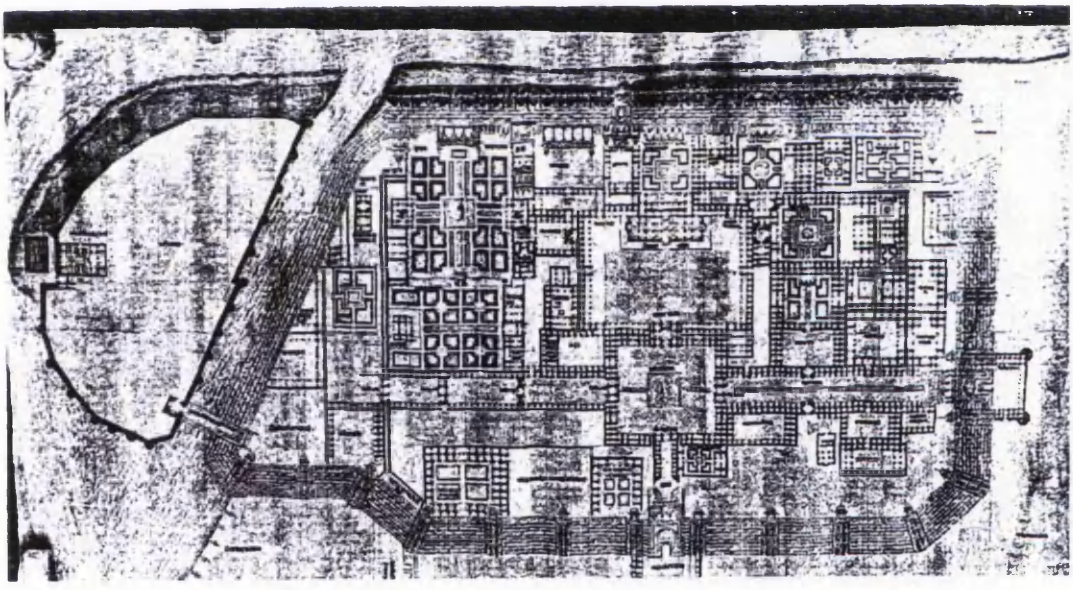

Figure 178 **'Red Fort of Delhi and Salimgarh'.**

Figure 179 **Map of Agra, made for the Maharaja of Jaipur. Jaipur, 1720s.**

Figure 180 **'Laknao', by Joseph Tieffenthaler. Lucknow, 1765-66.**

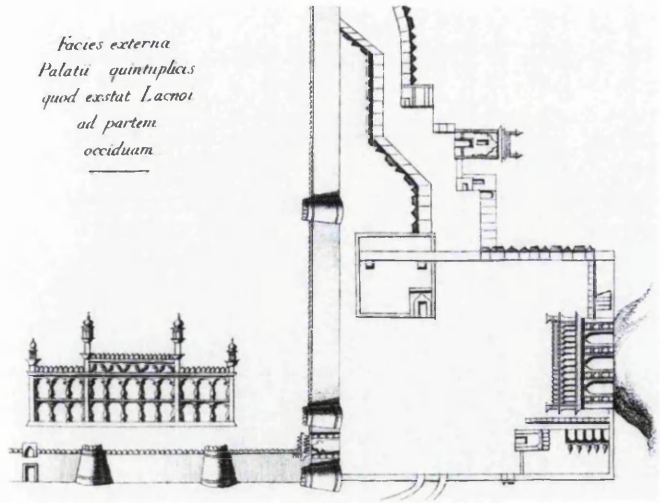

Figure 181 **'Facies externa Palatti quintuplicis', by Joseph Tieffenthaler. Lucknow, 1765-66.**

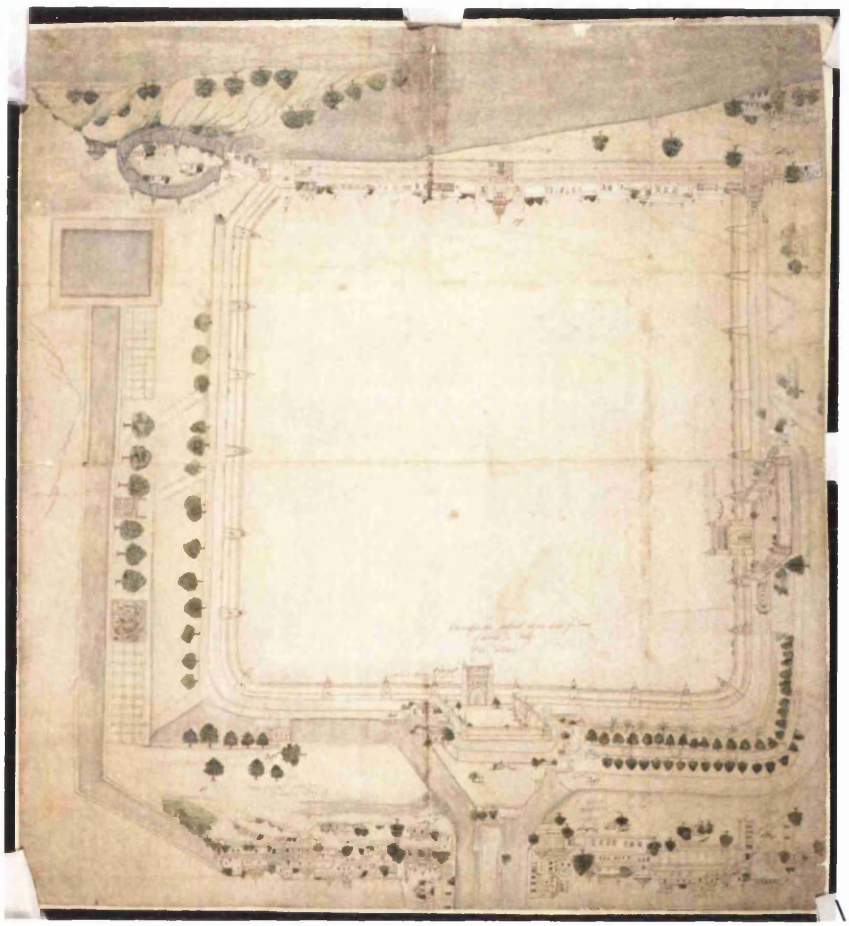

Figure 182 **Plan of the Red Fort showing the walls and gates. Delhi, c. 1774.**

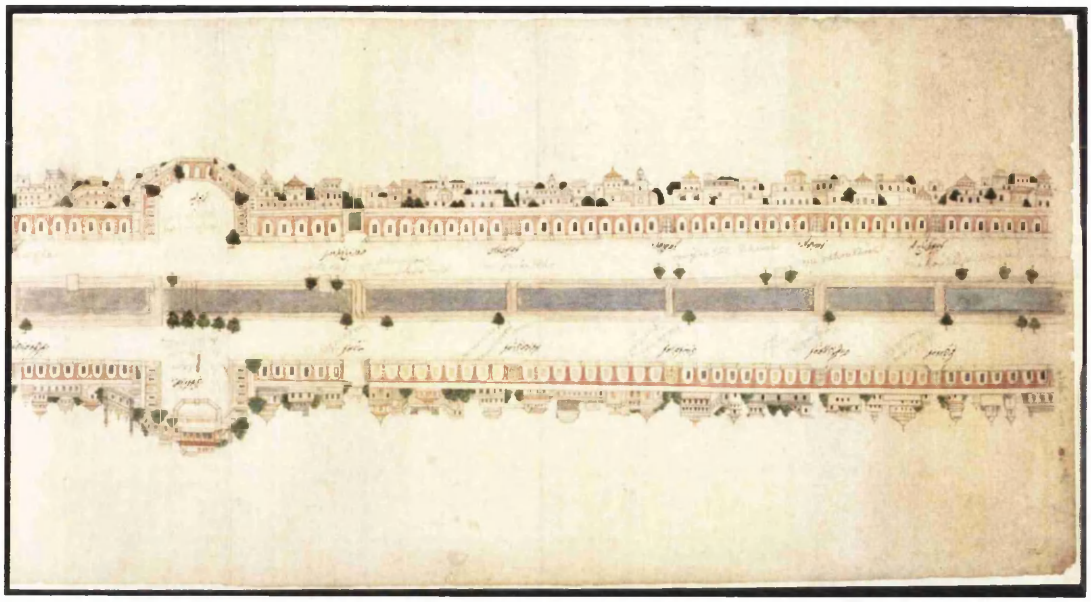

Figure 183 **'Street plan of Delhi showing part of Faiz Bazaar from the Delhi Gates of the city wall'. Delhi, c. 1774.**

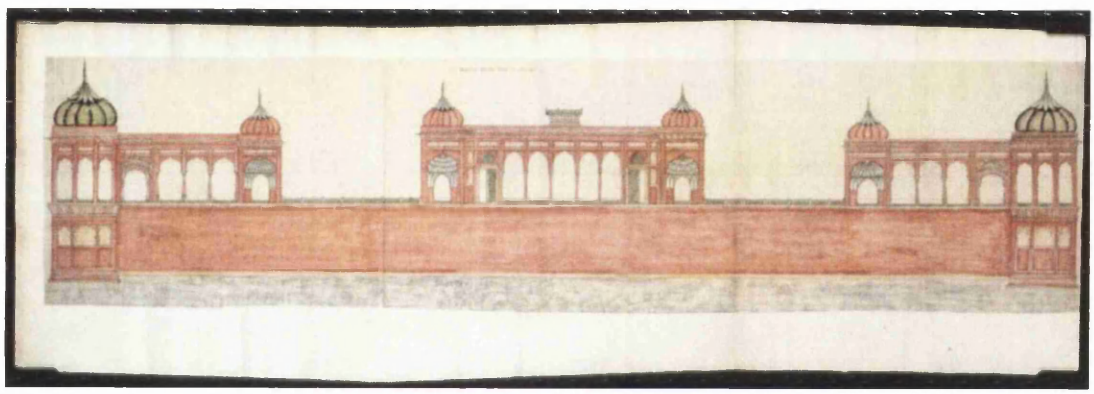

Figure 184 **'Palace of Shuja ud-Daula at Faizabad'. Lucknow, c. 1774.**

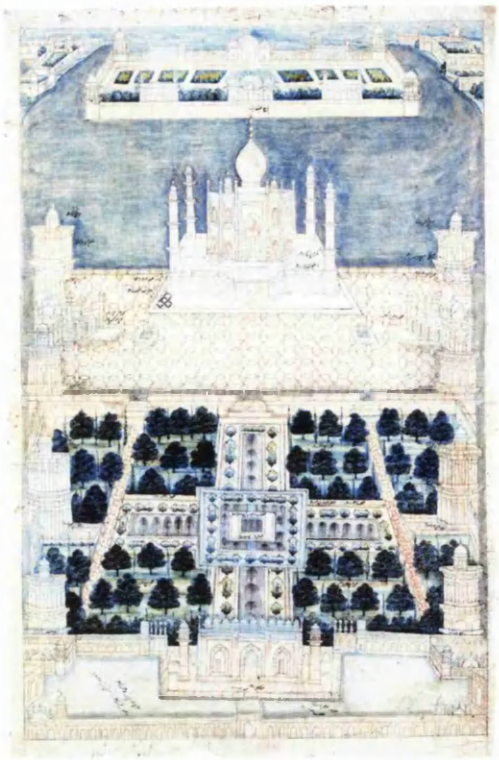

Figure 185 Taj Mahal. Delhi, pre-1803.

Figure 186 'Bird's eye view of the Red Fort, Agra on the banks of the river Jumna'. Delhi or Agra, pre-1803.

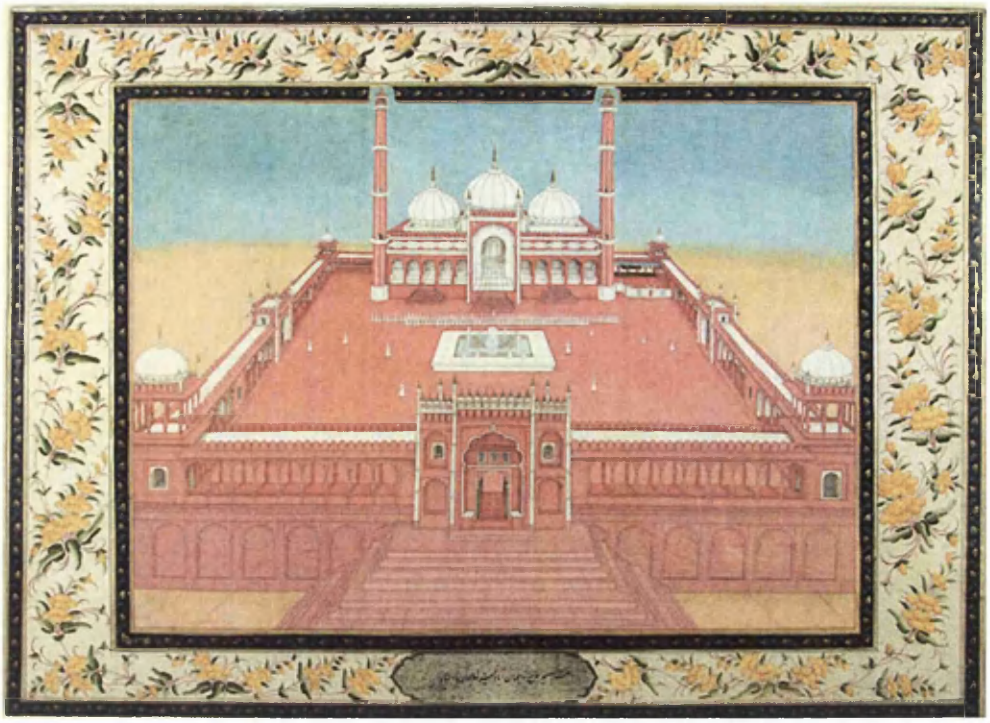

Figure 187 Jami Masjid at Delhi, here attributed to the workshop of Mihr Chand. Delhi or Lucknow, c. 1776-86.

Figure 188 'The Fort and Palace of Shah Jahan', attributed to the workshop of Mihr Chand. Delhi or Lucknow, c. 1776-86.

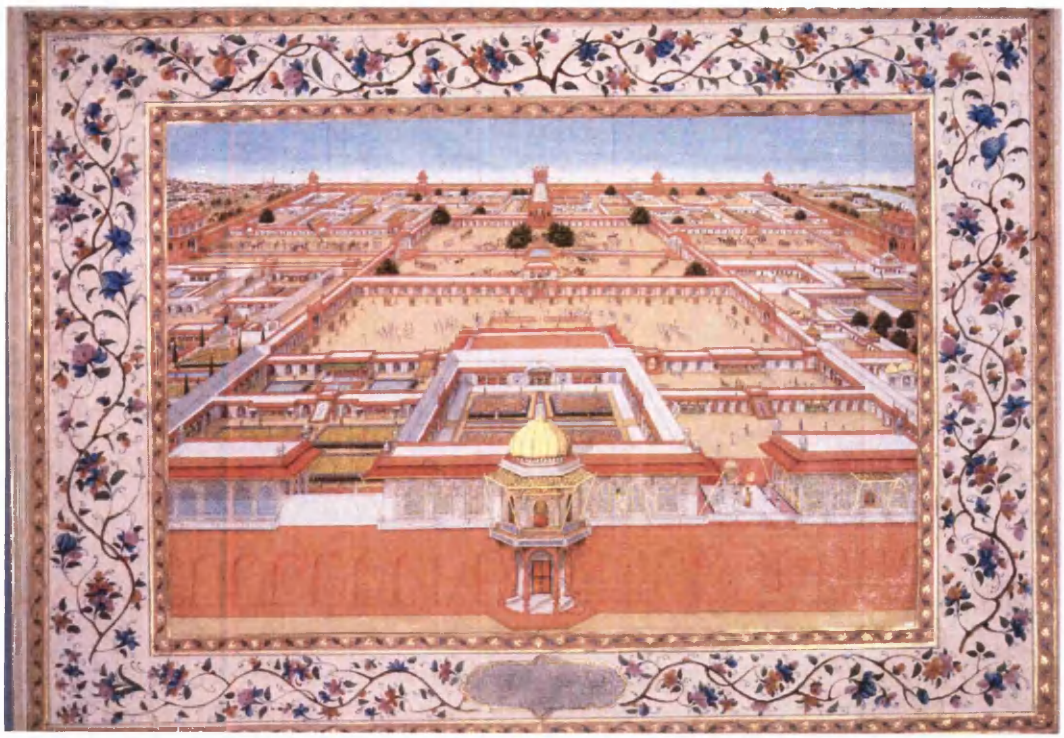

Figure 189 Red Fort in Delhi, here attributed to Mihr Chand. Delhi or Lucknow, c. 1776-86.

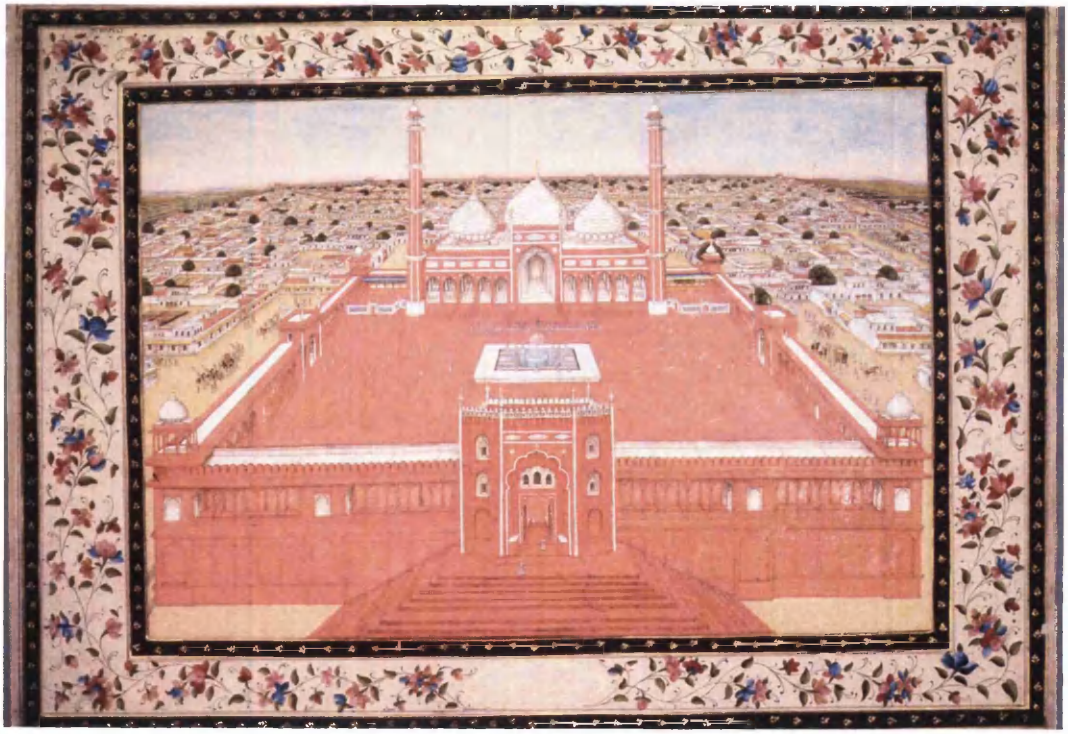

Figure 190 Jami Masjid at Delhi, here attributed to Mihr Chand. Delhi or Lucknow, c. 1776-86.

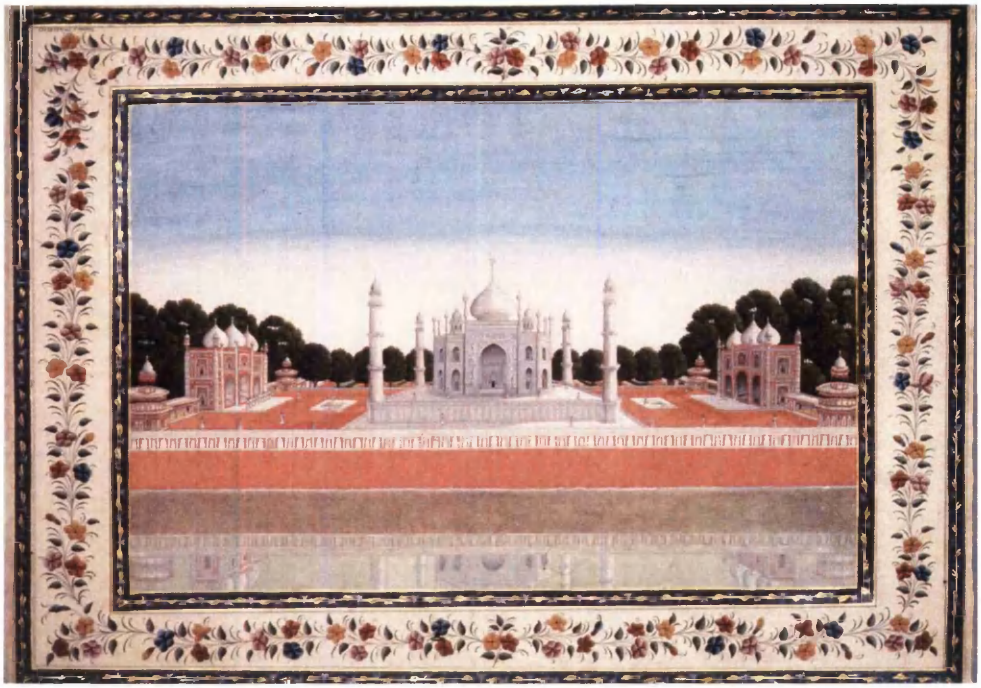

Figure 191 Taj Mahal, here attributed to Mihr Chand. Delhi or Lucknow, c. 1776-86.

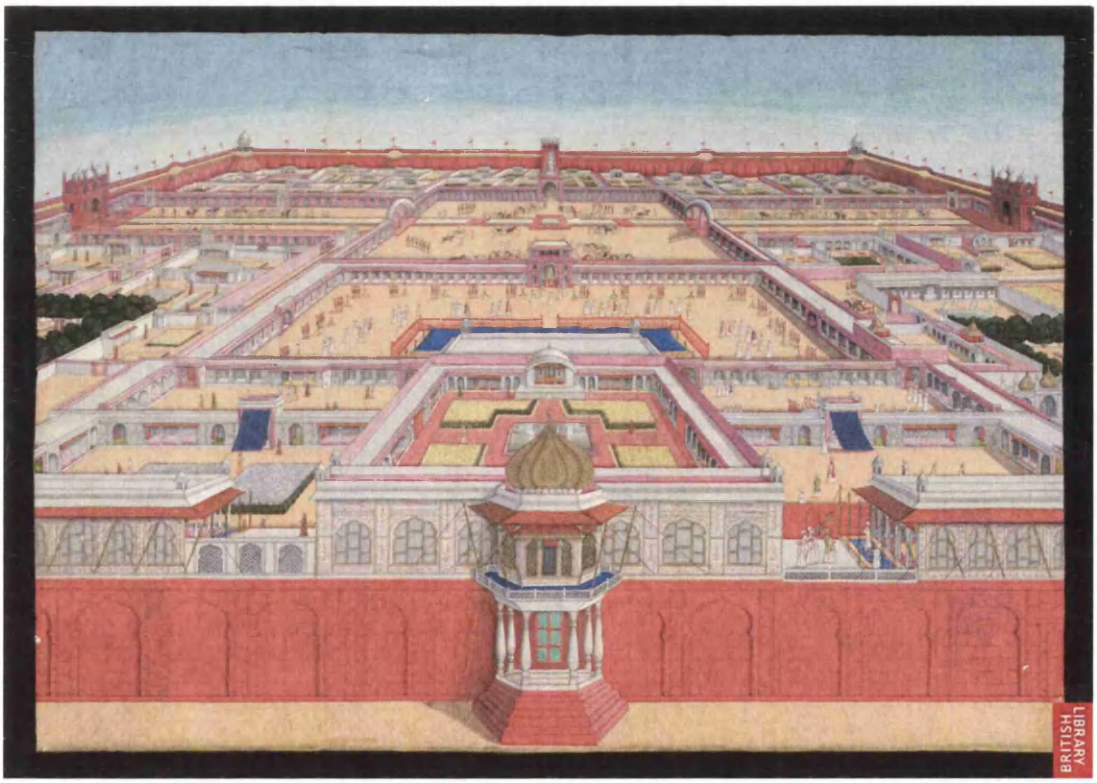

Figure 192 Red Fort in Delhi, Lucknow or Delhi, c. 1776-86.

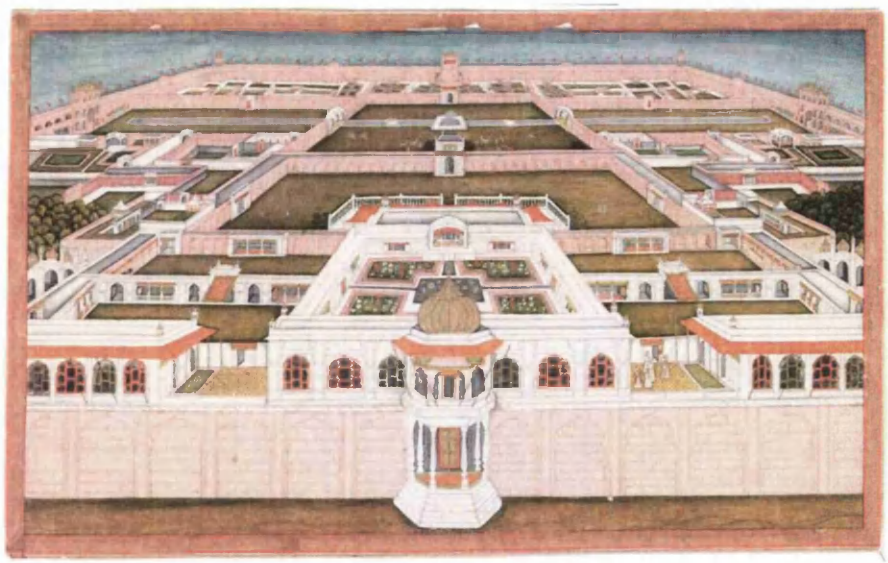

Figure 193 Red Fort in Delhi, here attributed to the workshop of Mihr Chand. Delhi or Lucknow, c. 1776-86.

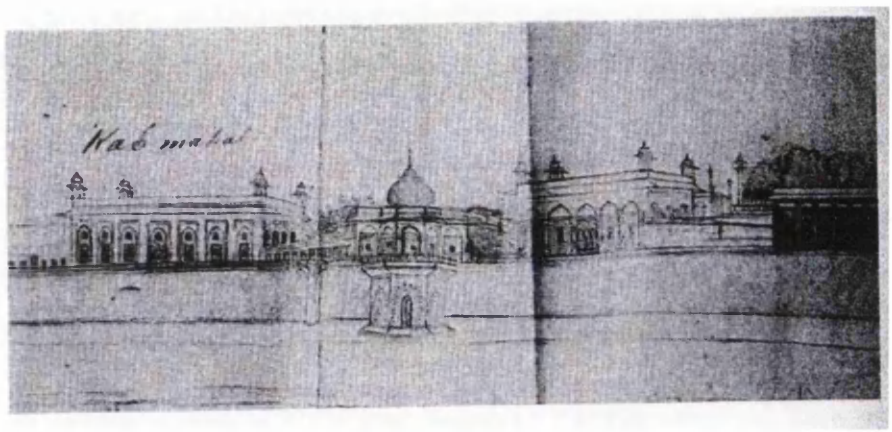

Figure 194 Red Fort of Delhi. Anon., c. 1776-79.

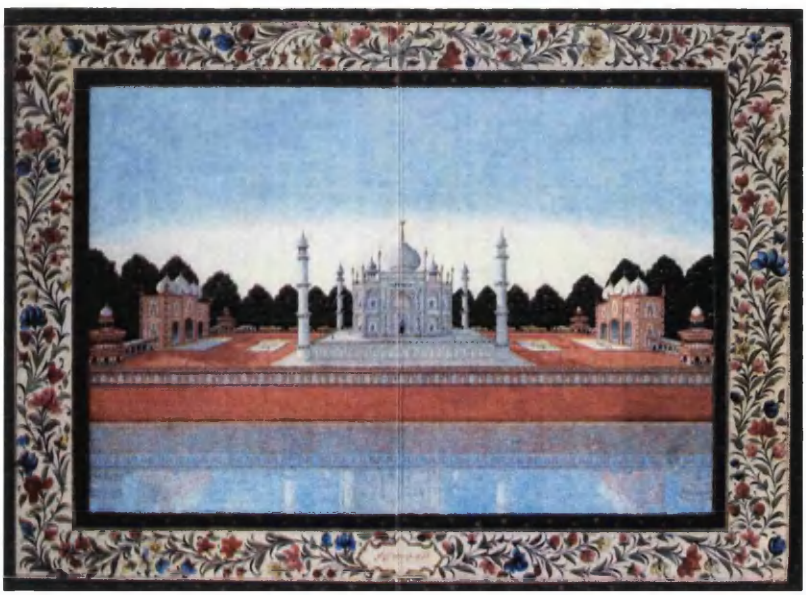

Figure 195 Taj Mahal, here attributed to Mihr Chand. Delhi or Lucknow, c. 1776-86.

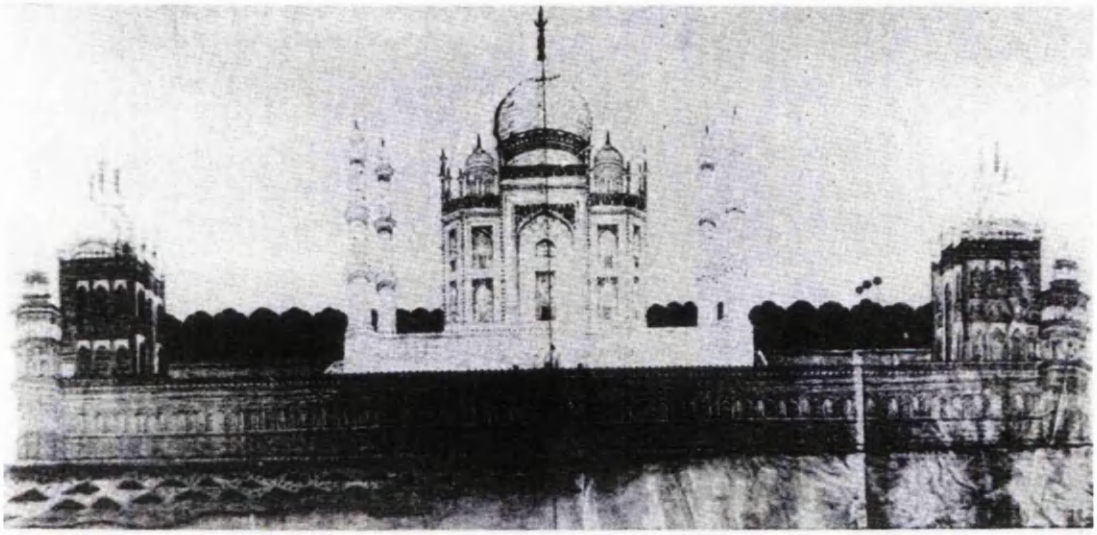

Figure 196 **Taj Mahal. Anon., c. 1797.**

Figure 197 **'Acrobats on a terrace', attributed by J. Bautze to circle of Faizullah. Lucknow, c. 1776-86.**

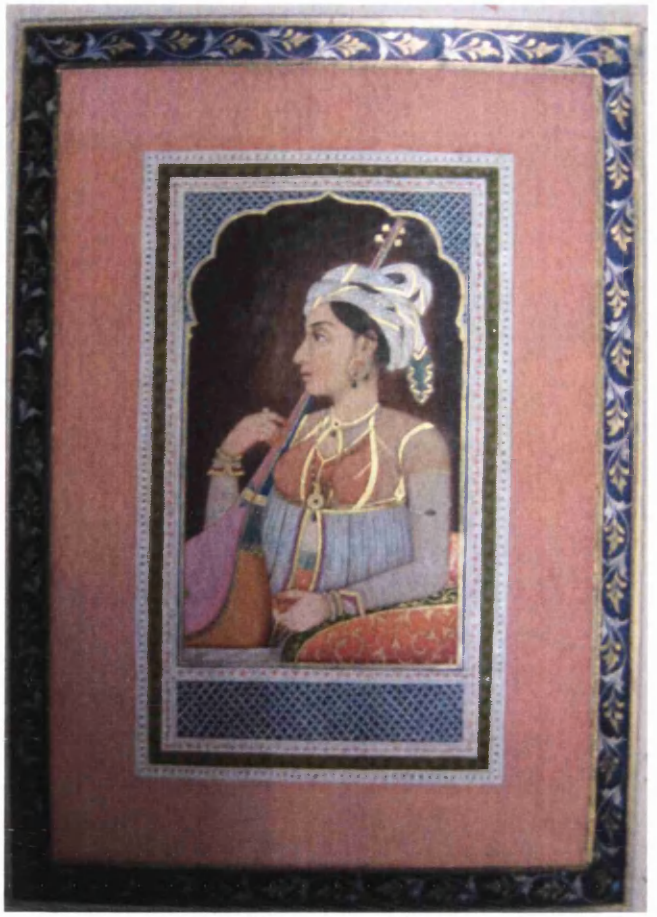

Figure 198 **'Portrait of a lady with a tambura resting on her shoulder', here attributed to Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1776-86.**

Figure 199 **Shaikh Sher Muhammad Qawwal (singer); with smaller portraits of Jahangir and Mirza Aziz Koka by Muhammad Nadir Samarqand.**

Figure 200 **'Dervish receiving a visitor', attributed to the Bodleian painter. Bijapur, c. 1610-20.**

Figure 201 **'Dervish receiving a visitor', by Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1765-74.**

Figure 202 Two portraits of women, on either side of a portrait of Shuja ud-Daula, here attributed to Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1776-86.

Figure 203 'A portrait of a lady with a mosque in the distance,' here attributed to Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1776-86.

Figure 204 **'A portrait of a lady', here attributed to Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1776-86.**

Figure 205 **'A portrait of a lady resting a tambura on her shoulder', here attributed to Mihr Chand. Faizabad, c. 1776-86.**

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Appendix 1
Mihr Chand's signed works

1
Humayun
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram' and 'Shah Abbas Ali Shah'
Faizabad, here dated c. 1765-73
Image: 23.8 x 14.6 cm; Folio: 41.5 x 28.2 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4594 folio 25v
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Published: Anand and Goetz (1967, pl. 3)

2

'Amir ul-Umra, Shayasteh Khan, the army general of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb '

By Mihr Chand

Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram' and 'Amir al-Umra Shaista Khan'

Faizabad, here dated c. 1765-73

Tinted drawing and gold on paper

Image: 29.5 x 21.2 cm, Folio: 41.5 x 28.2 cm

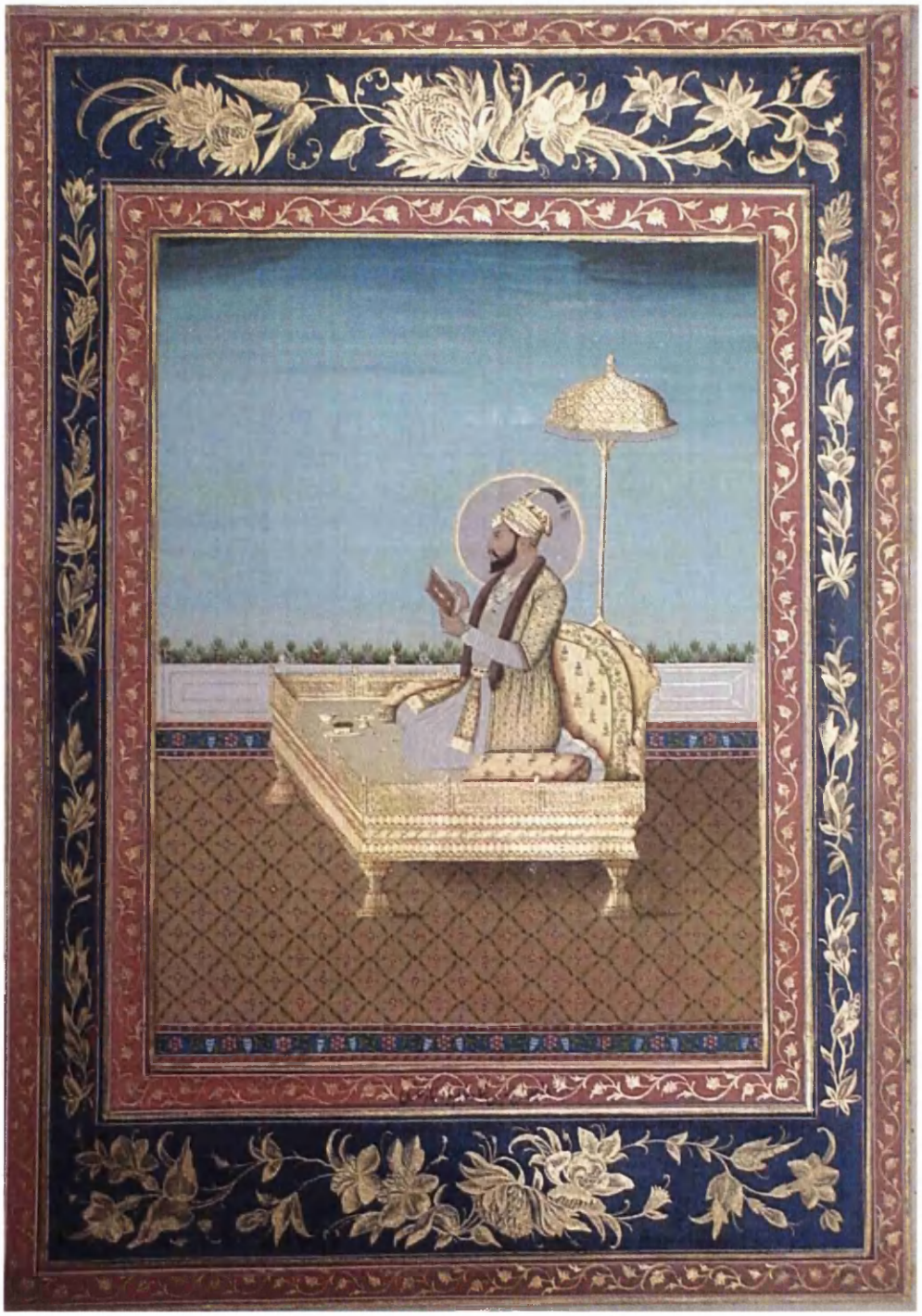
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4594 folio 21v

Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier

Published: Kheiri (1921, plate 12); Kühnel (1922, pl. 101; 1937, pl. 10; 1946, pl. 10)

3
Farrukh Siyar
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian in lower panel: 'work of Mihr Chand' and in cartouche: 'Abul-muzaffar Mu'inu'd Muhammad Farrukhsiyar Badshah Ghazi'
Faizabad, c. 1776
Image: 13.8 x 20.3 cm, Folio: 17.4 x 28.6 cm
Museum für Indische Kunst, MIK I 5063 folio 14b
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Published: Weber (1983, pl. 83)

4
Shah Alam II
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram' and 'Abu al-Muzaffar Jalal al-Din Shah Alam Padshah Ghazi'
Allahabad, c. 1759
Image: 24.7 x 18.1cm; Folio: 31.5 x 25 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4594 folio 32v
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Published: Enderlein and Hickmann (1979, pl. 50); Hickmann (1975, pl. 75); Losty (2002, pl. 8)



5
'Nawab Shuja ud-Daula with his ten sons'
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand, son of Ganga Ram'
Inscribed in Polier's hand: 'No. 18'
Faizabad, c. 1774
Image: 33.3 x 23.2 cm; Folio: 50 x 36.4 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4596 folio 18r
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Published: Archer (1979, pl. 33); Erdmann (1933, pl. 2); Hickmann (1975, p, 85)

6

'Full length portrait of Nawab Shuja ud-Daula holding a bow with attendants and an elephant in the background'

By Mihr Chand,

Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram;' in the margin, 'Nawab Shuja ud-Daula Bahadur'

Faizabad, 1773-74

Image: 24.3 x 14.7 cm; Folio: 41.5 x 28.2 cm

Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4594 folio 18v

Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton, Antoine Polier

Unpublished

7

'Full length portrait of Nawab Shuja ud-Daula holding a bow with attendants and an elephant in the background'

By Mihr Chand

Inscribed in Persian in the margin: '... Nawab Shuja ud-Daula Bahadur'

Faizabad, c. 1773-74

Folio: 22.5 x 15 cm

Victoria and Albert Museum, London – IS 287-1951

Published: Archer (1992, p. 116); Llewellyn-Jones (2006)

Mildred Archer dated this version to c. 1772. Polier's own letters provide a more accurate dating to c. 1773-74.

8

Shuja ud-Daula

By Mihr Chand

Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram;' in margin: 'Nawab Shuja ud-Daula Bahadur'

Faizabad, c.1773-74

Image: 9.9 x 7.7 cm

Ashmolean Museum, Oxford University – 1993.11

Provenance: Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bt. (1792-1872), Bibliotheca Phillippica Ms. 6730; Antoine Polier

Published: Ashmolean Bulletin (1993)

9

Shuja ud-Daula

By Mihr Chand

Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram; 'Nawab Shuja ud-Daula Bahadur'

Faizabad, c. 1773-74

Image: 11.1 x 9.0 cm; Folio: 41.5 x 28.2 cm

Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4594 folio 38v

Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier

Unpublished

10
Nawab Asaf ud-Daula
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian on the frame 'work of Mihr Chand;' above, 'Nawab Asaf al-Daula Bahadur'
Faizabad or Lucknow, c. 1773-75
Image: 16.5 x 13.3cm; Folio: 45 x 28.5 cm
The British Library, APAC, Add.Or.4390
Published: Losty (2003, pl. 3)

11
Nawab Zabita Khan
By Mihr Chand,
Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram;' in margin, 'Nawab Amir ul-Umra Zabita Khan'
Faizabad, c. 1772
Image: 11.2 x 7.3 cm; Folio: 27.6 x 18.6 cm
The Smithsonian Institution, Freer and Sackler Gallery – Vever Collection, S86.0416
Provenance: Henri Vever (1854-1942), Antoine Polier
Published: Lowry (1988, pl. 391)

12
'Imaginary Courtesan'
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand'
Inscribed in Persian in the gold cartouche on border: 'tasvir-i khiyal' (a picture of an apparition)
Faizabad, c. 1765-70
Image: 11.7 x 7.6 cm ; Folio: 42.4 x 34.7
The British Library, APAC, J.66,2
Provenance: Richard Johnson
Published: Falk and Archer (1981, pl. 248)

13
'Portrait of a Mughal lady'
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram'
Faizabad, c. 1765-70
Image: 22.3 x 14.6 cm; Folio: 41.5 x 28.2 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4594 folio 8r
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Published: Goetz and Anand (1967)

14
Venus
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram'
Faizabad, c.1776-86
Image: 15 x 21.3 cm; Folio: 41.5 x 28.2 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4594 folio 27r
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Published: Kühnel (1922, pl. 102)

15
Venus
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram'
Faizabad, c.1776-86
Image: 9.7 x 15 cm; Folio: 40 x 28 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4595 folio 22r
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Unpublished

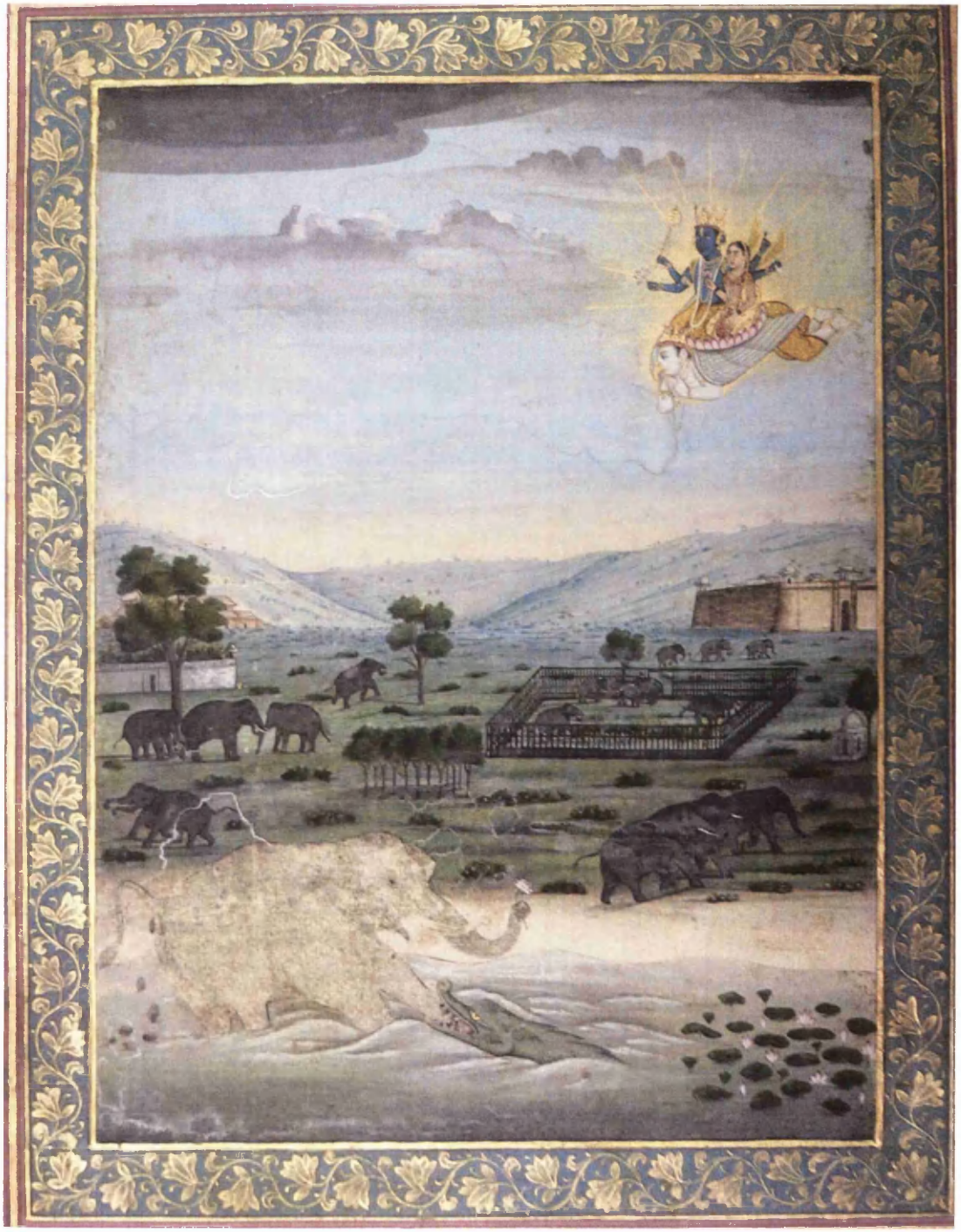
16
'Woman holding a tambura'
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram'
Faizabad, c.1765-73
Image: 21.8 x 14.9 cm; Folio: 40 x 28 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4595 folio 2r
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Unpublished

17
'Colonel Polier watching a nautch'
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram'
Faizabad, c. 1774
Image: 9 x 28 cm; Folio: 29 x 39.6 cm
Collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan
Provenance: Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bt. (1792-1872), Bibliotheca Phillippica Ms. 6730; Antoine Polier
Published: Goswamy and Fischer (1987, pl. 106); Welch (1978, pl. 34); Losty (2002, pl. 17); Canby (1998)

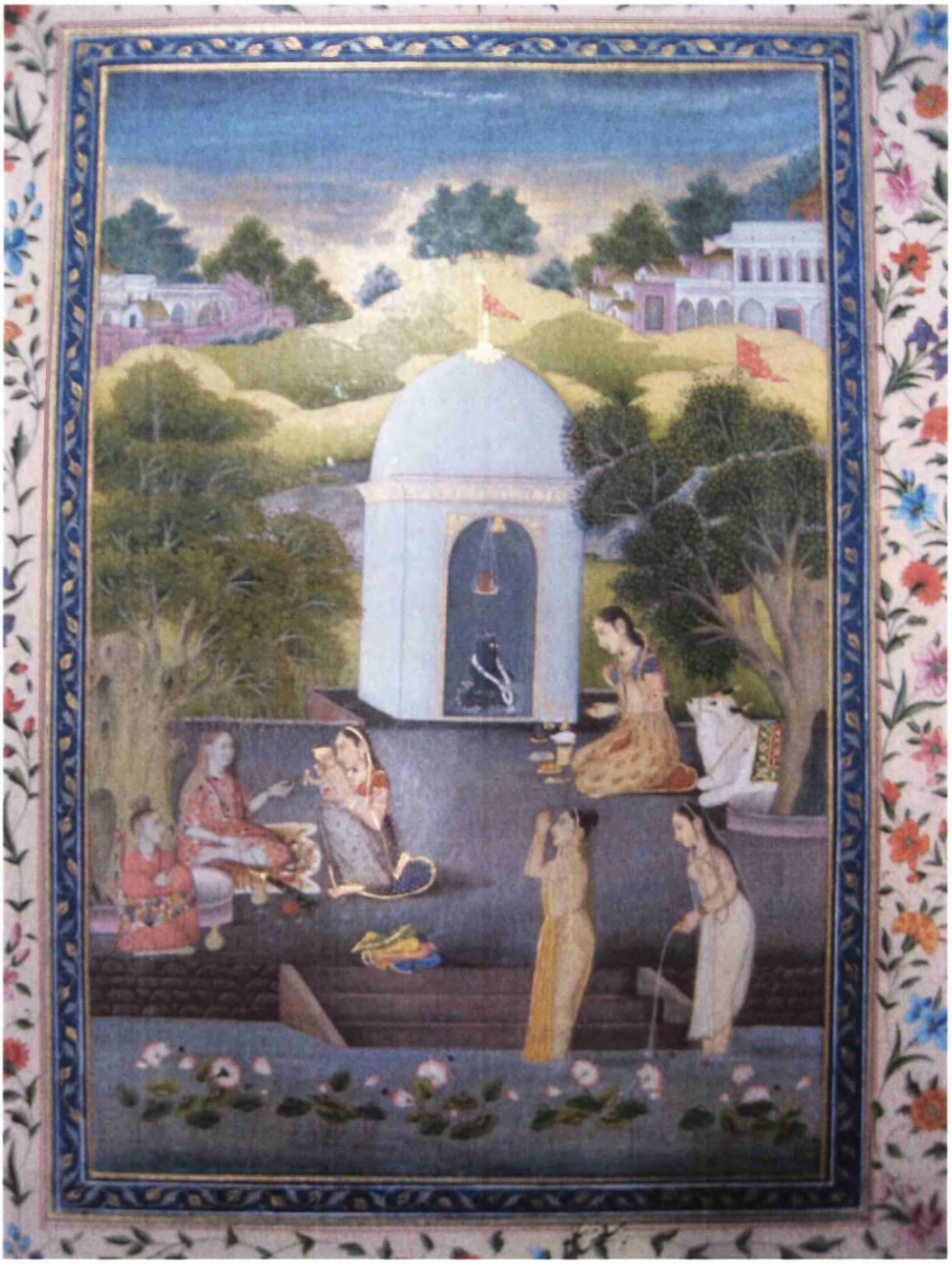
18
'Vishnu and Lakshmi with Garuda'
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram'
Faizabad, c. 1765-76.
Image: 18.5 x 13.2 cm; Folio: 40 x 28 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4595 folio 35r
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Published Kühnel (1922, p. 133; 1937, pl. 35); Goetz and Anand (1967, pl. 34)

19

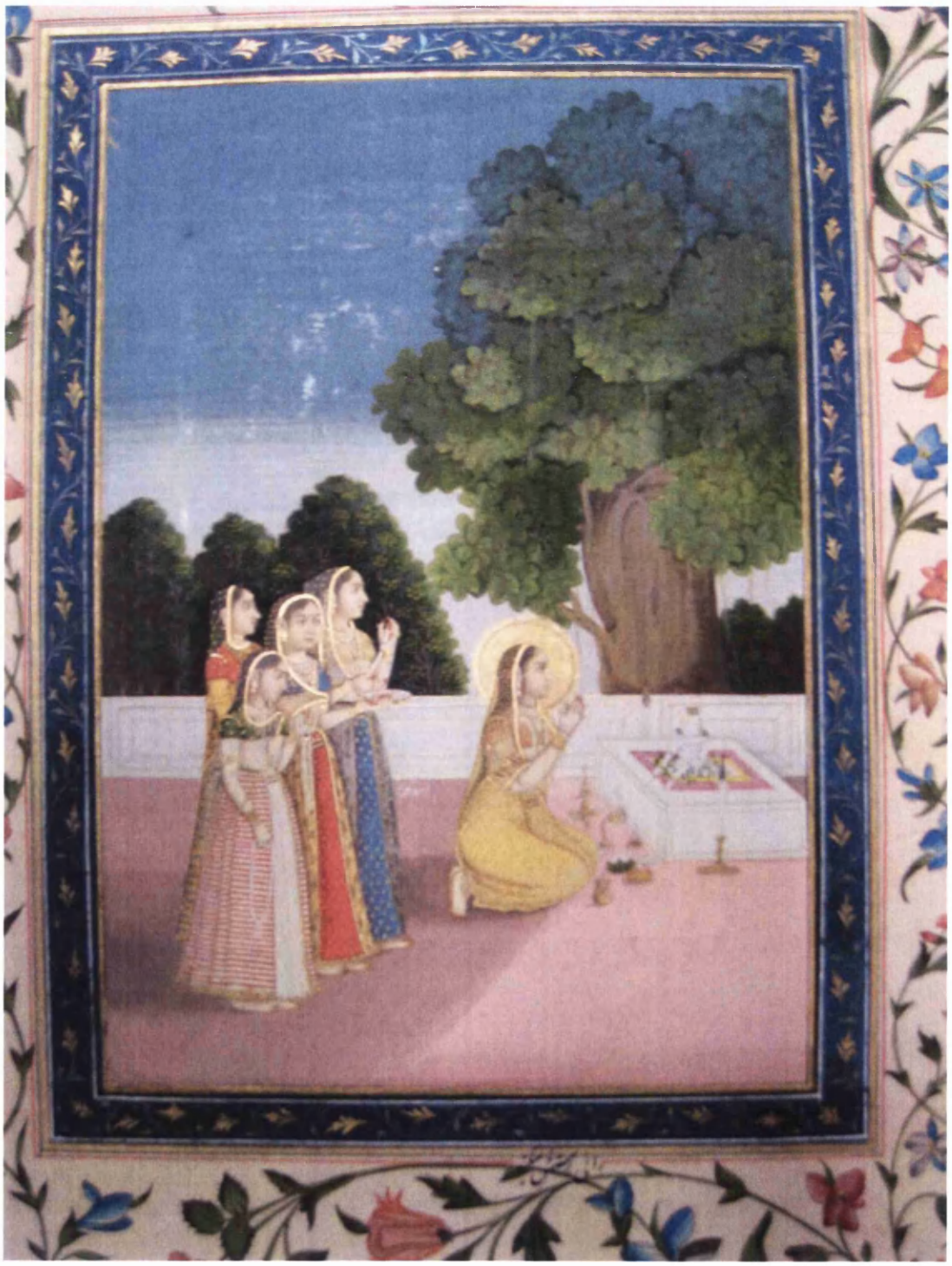
'Gajendra-moksa, Vishnu rescuing the elephant'
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed on reverse in English, possibly by R. Johnson: 'work of Mihr Chand' and 'work of Rai Fath Chand' which is crossed out
Faizabad, c. 1770
Gouache with gold leaf on paper, 19.5 x 14.3 cm
The British Library, APAC J.40,1
Provenance: Richard Johnson
Published: Losty (2003, pl. 11)



20
'Shiv Puja'
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram'
Faizabad, c. 1765-76
Image: 26.4 x 17.1 cm; Folio: 41.5 x 28.5 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4594 folio 6v
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Published Goetz and Anand (1967, pl. 26); Goetz (1930, pl. 117)



21
'Bhairava Ragini'
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram'; 'siva puja'
Faizabad, c. 1765-76
Image: 20.4 x 14 cm; Folio: 41.5 x 28.5 xm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4594 folio 9v
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Published: Kühnel (1922, p. 134; 1937, pl. 34; 1955, pl. 20)

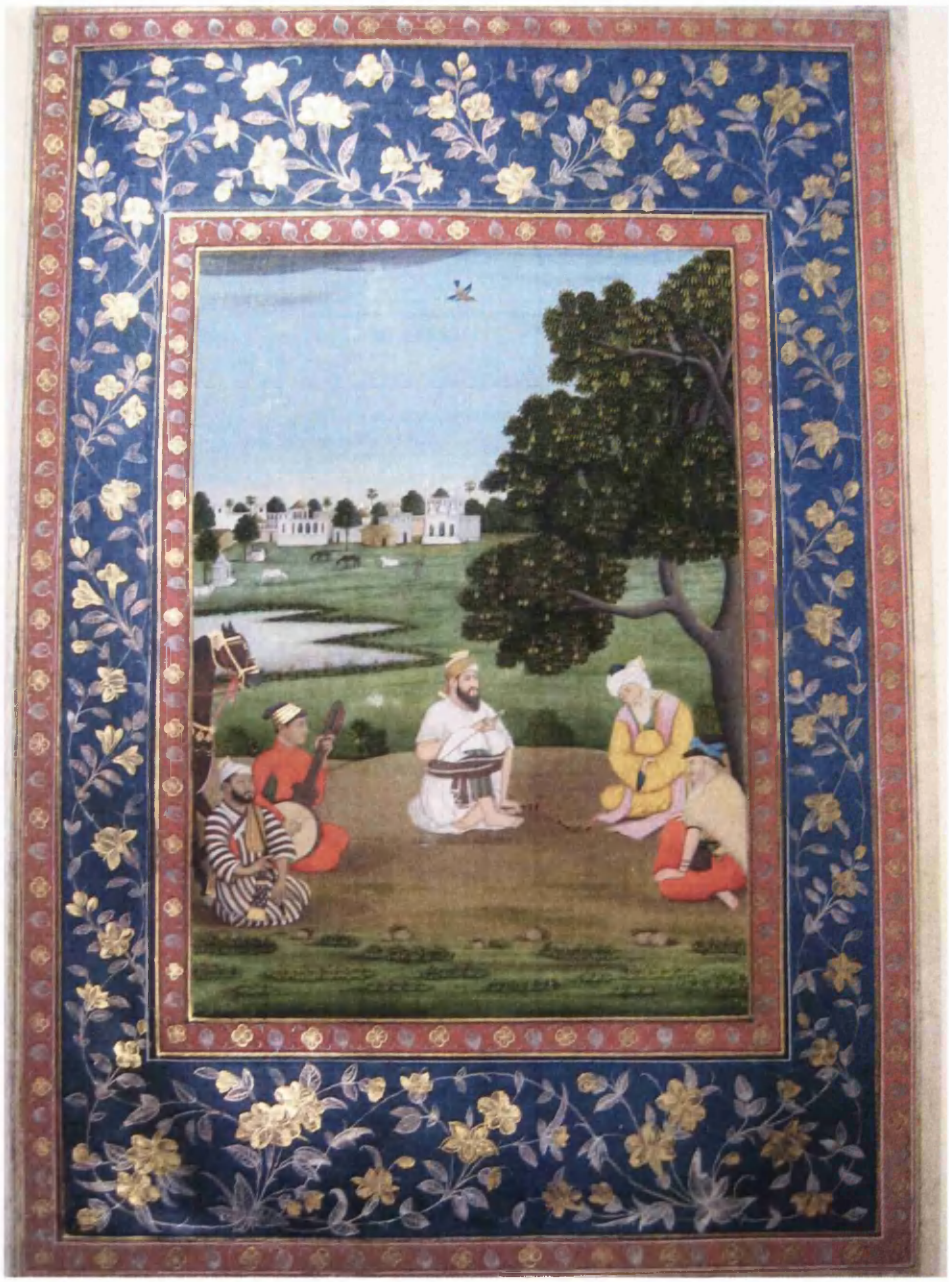


22
'Dervish receiving a visitor'
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram,' and in margin: 'Hazrat Shah Madar'
Faizabad, c. 1765-76
Image: 19.8 x 26.2 cm; Folio: 41.5 x 28.5 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4594 folio 40v
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Published: Kühnel (1921, pl. 25); Zebrowski (1983, pl. 53)

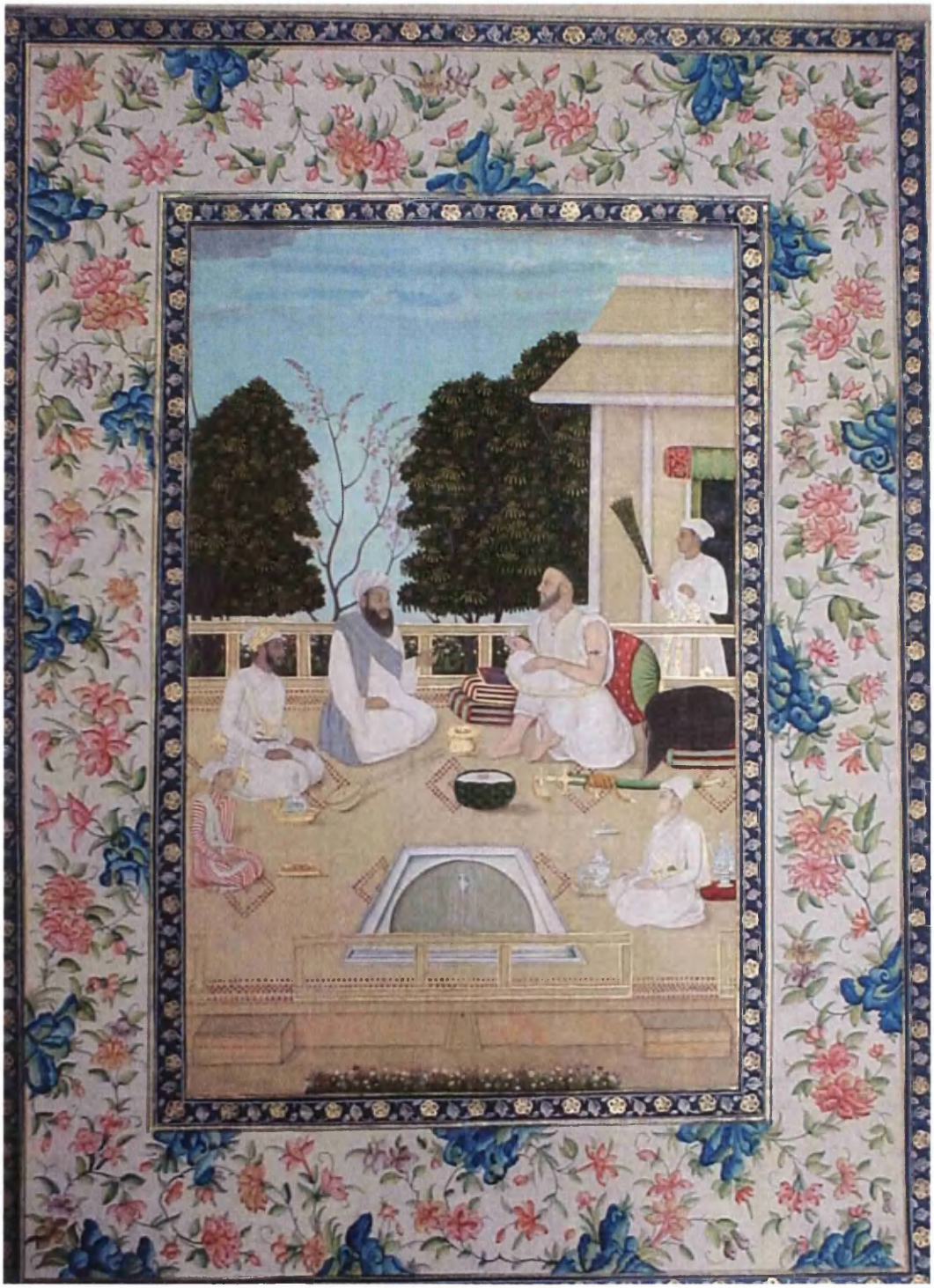
23
'Fakirs sitting in front of a hermitage'
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram'
Faizabad, c. 1765-76
Image: 18.9 x 13.5 cm; Folio: 41.5 x 28.5 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4594 folio 1r
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Published: Goetz (1930, pl. 118)

24
'A prince celebrating the festival of Holi with the women of the harem'
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram'
Faizabad, c. 1765-76
Image: 28 x 19.6 cm; Folio: 41.5 x 28.5 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4594 folio 30v
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Published: Goetz (1930, pl. 41)

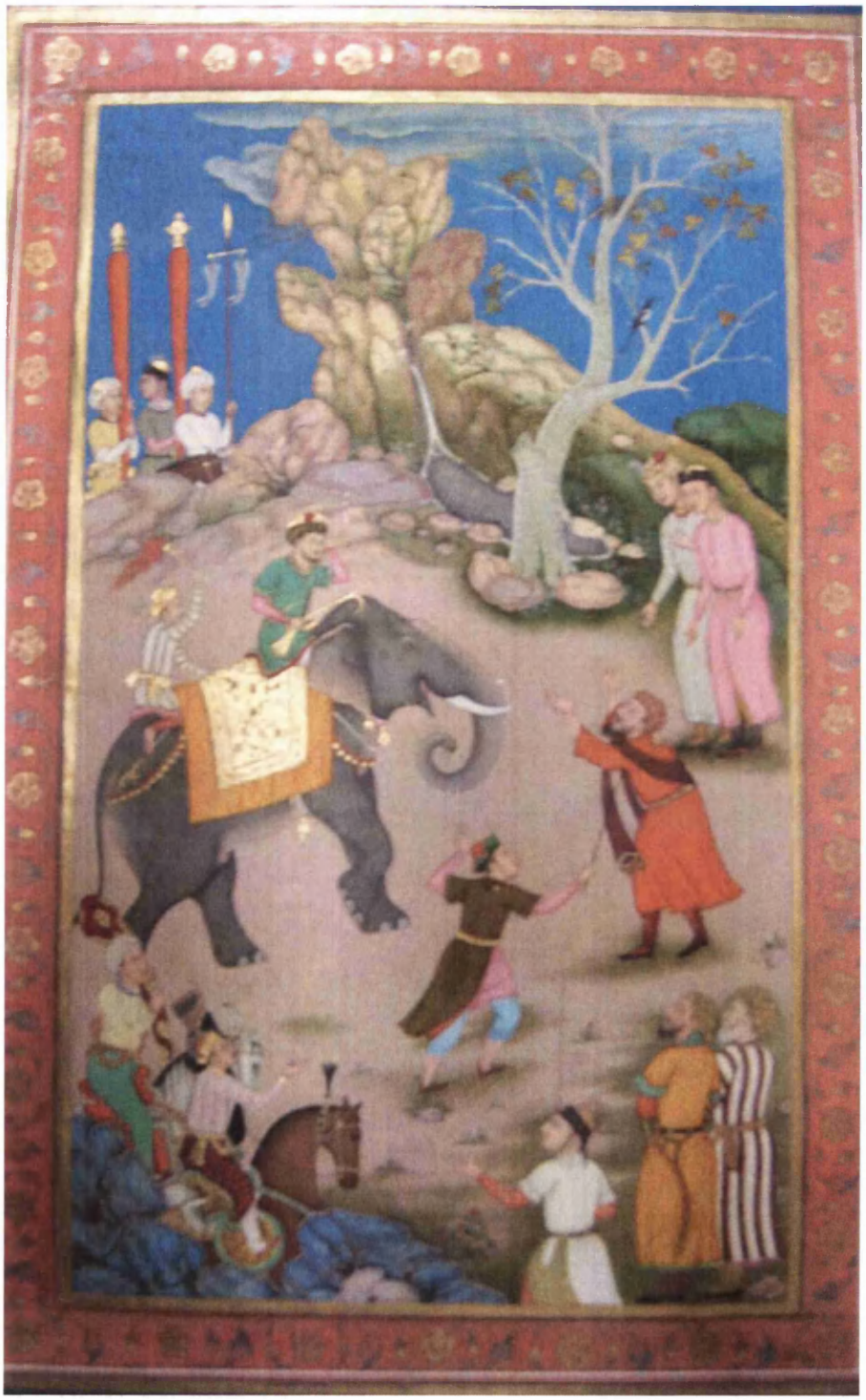
25
'A sheikh sitting under a tree with an ascetic and musicians'
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram'
Faizabad, c. 1765-73
Image: 23.4 x 16.5 cm; Folio: 41.5 x 28.5 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4594 folio 28v
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Unpublished



26
'A prince meeting Sheikh Shir Muhammad Kawwal'
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram'
Faizabad, c. 1765-73
Image: 32.1 x 20.1 cm; Folio: 50 x 36.5 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4596 folio 29v
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Published: Kheiri (1924)



27
'Noble on an elephant and accompanied by attendants meets a person on foot'
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram'
Faizabad, c. 1765-73
Image: 20.5 x 12 cm; Folio: 41.5 x 28.5 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4594 folio 10v
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Published: Kühnel (1922, pl. 106; 1923, p. 226; 1937, pl. 1; 1946, pl. 1)



28
Nilgau
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram;' in margin, 'nili-gau'
Faizabad, c. 1763-73
Image: 17.7 x 26.6 cm ; Folio: 41.5 x 28.5 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4594 folio 2v
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Published: Kheiri (1921, pl. 5)

29

Illustrations in the margin of an unidentified portrait

Marginal illustrations by Mihr Chand

Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram'

Folio: 41.5 x 28.5 cm

Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4594 folio16v

Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier

Published: Kheiri (1921, pl. 45); Schmitz (1997, fig. 203)

30
'Garden Scene'
By Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian: 'work of Mihr Chand son of Ganga Ram'
Faizabad or Delhi, ca. 1776-86
Image: 17.4 x 17.2 cm; Folio: 41.5 x 28.5 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, Berlin I.4594 folio 39r
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Published: Gadesbusch (2000, p. 70)

Appendix II
Works attributed to Mihr Chand

1

'Full length portrait of Nawab Shuja ud-Daula holding a bow with attendants and an elephant in the background'

Here attributed to Mihr Chand
Inscribed in Persian: 'portrait of handsomeness'
Faizabad, c. 1776-86
Image: 38.5 x 41.1 cm; Folio: 45 x 61.3 cm
Achenbach Collection for Graphic Arts, San Francisco, 1982.70.1
Provenance: Mr. and Mrs. John D. MacDonald; Lady Eyre Coote; Antoine Polier
Published: Welch (1978, pl. 35)

2

'Full length portrait of Nawab Shuja ud-Daula holding a bow with attendants and a horse in the background'

Here attributed to Mihr Chand

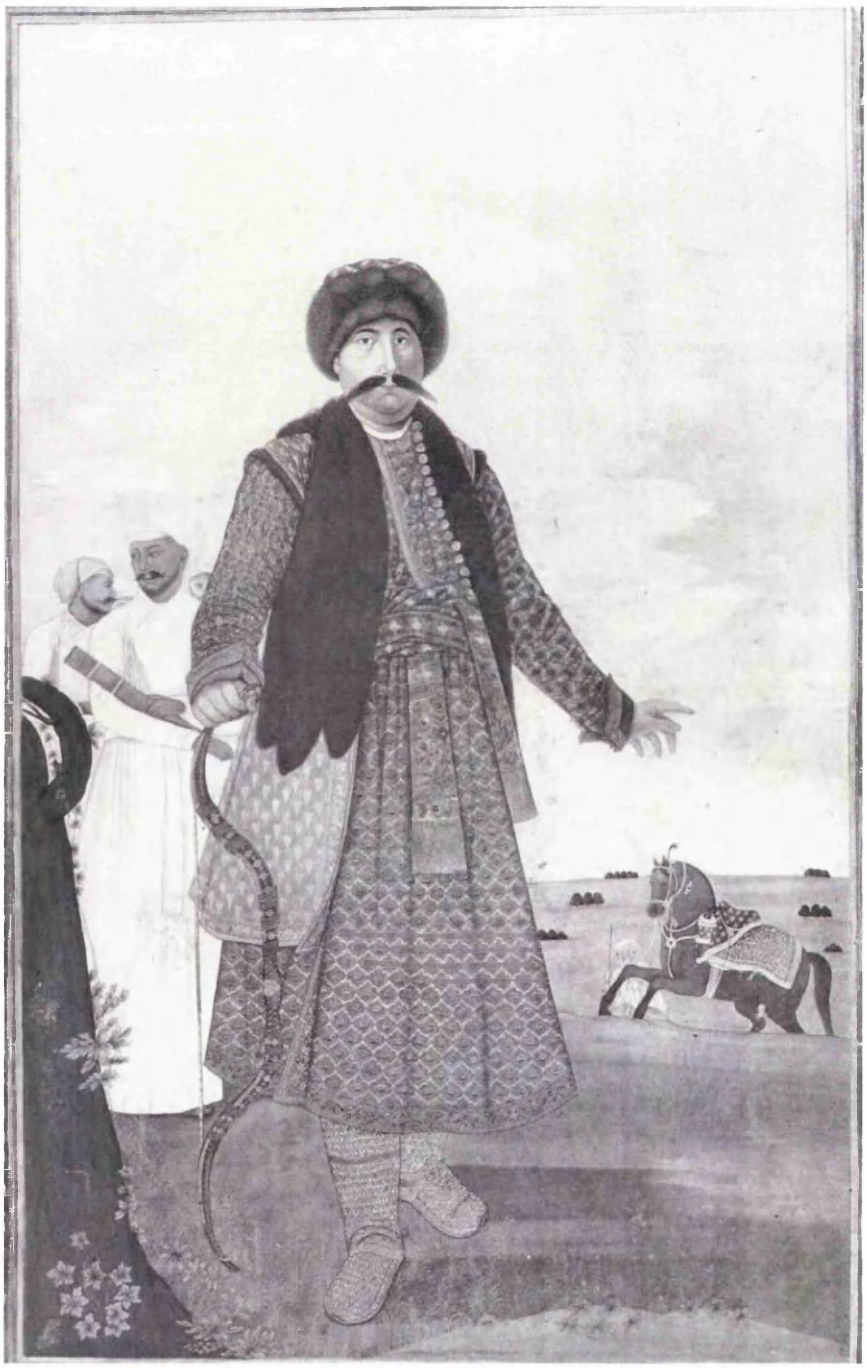
Inscribed in Persian in cartouche at top: *'tasvir-i Nawab Shuja ud-Daula Bahadur'* (picture of Nawab Shuja ud-Daula Bahadur)

Faizabad, c. 1773-74

Folio: 39.7 x 24.5 cm

The British Museum, 1946-10-10-03

Unpublished



3
Head and shoulder portrait of Shuja ud-Daula
Attributed to Mihr Chand
Faizabad, c.1775
Gouache and gold leaf
Image: 9.7 x 7.7 cm; Folio: 39 x 28 cm
The British Library, APAC, Add.Or.4389
Unpublished

4

Shah Alam II

Here attributed to Mihr Chand

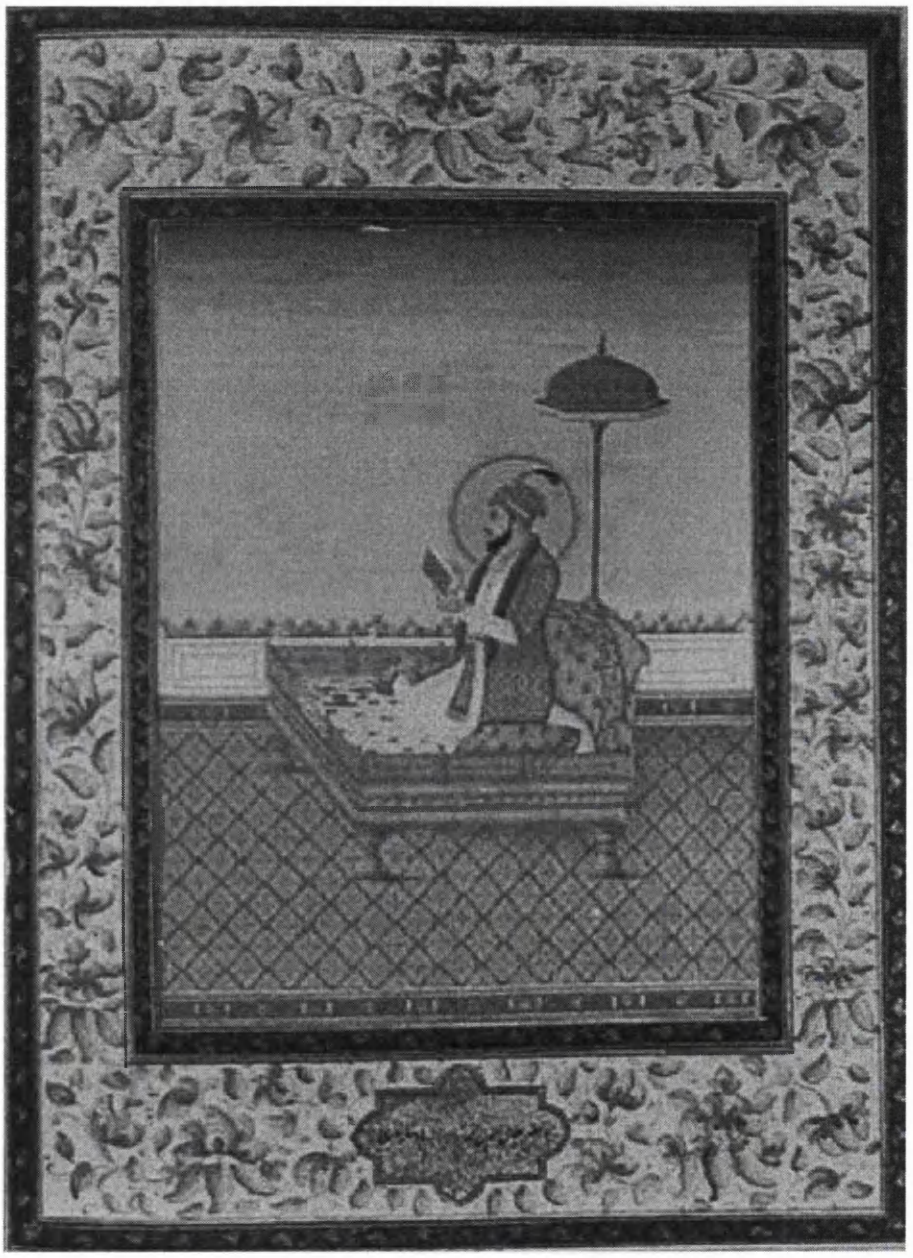
Inscribed in Persian: *'Abu'l Muzaffar Jalalu'd-din Muhammad Shah Alam Badshah Ghazi'*

Allahabad, c. 1759

Image: 18.1 x 24.8 cm; Folio: 17.4 x 28.6 cm

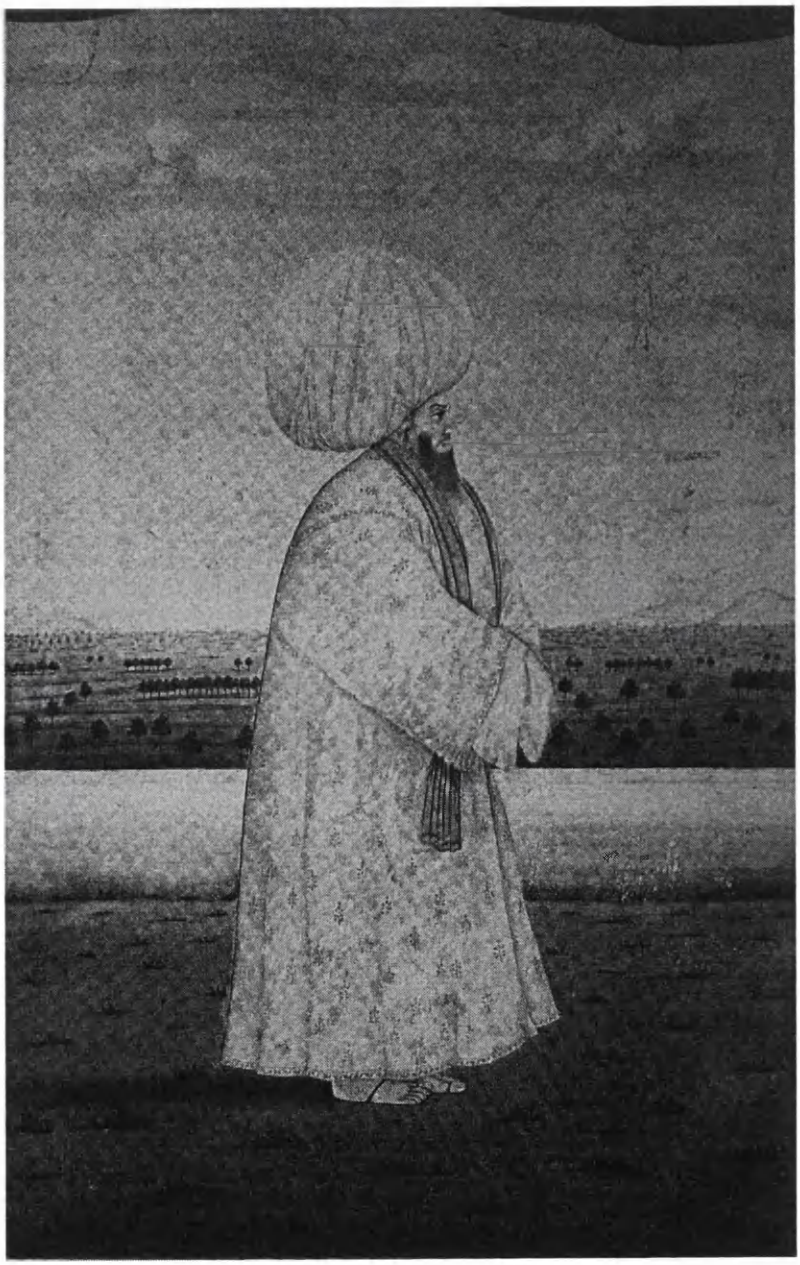
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier

Published: Weber (1982, pl. 90)

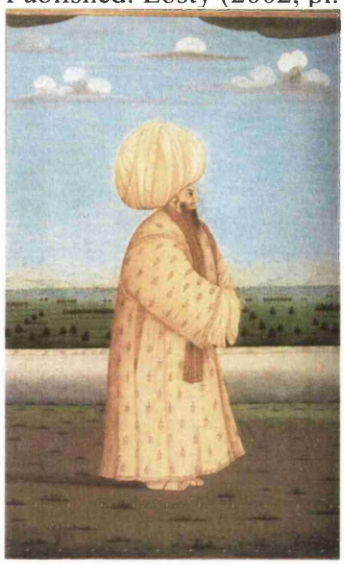


5
Maharana Jai Singh of Amber
Here attributed to Mihr Chand
Faizabad, c. 1765-73
Image: 33.5 x 21.7 cm; Folio: 40.5 x 28 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4599 folio 7r
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Unpublished

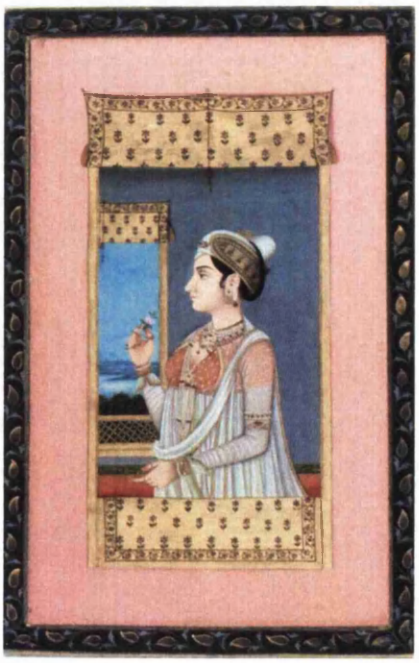
6
'Turkish Mullah'
Here attributed to Mihr Chand
Faizabad, c. 1765-76
Image: 21.6 x 13.6 cm
Chester Beatty Library
Provenance: Unavailable
Published: Leach (1995, 662)



7
'A Mufti standing in a landscape'
Here attributed to Mihr Chand
Faizabad, c. 1765-76
Image: 21.2 x 13.5 cm
The British Library, APAC, J.1,20
Published: Losty (2002, pl. 12)



8
'A portrait of an Awadhi lady'
Here attributed to Mihr Chand
Faizabad, c. 1776-86
Image: 21.2 x 12.9 cm; Folio: 40 x 28 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4597 folio 16.
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Unpublished



9

'A portrait of a lady resting a tambura on her shoulder'

Here attributed to Mihr Chand

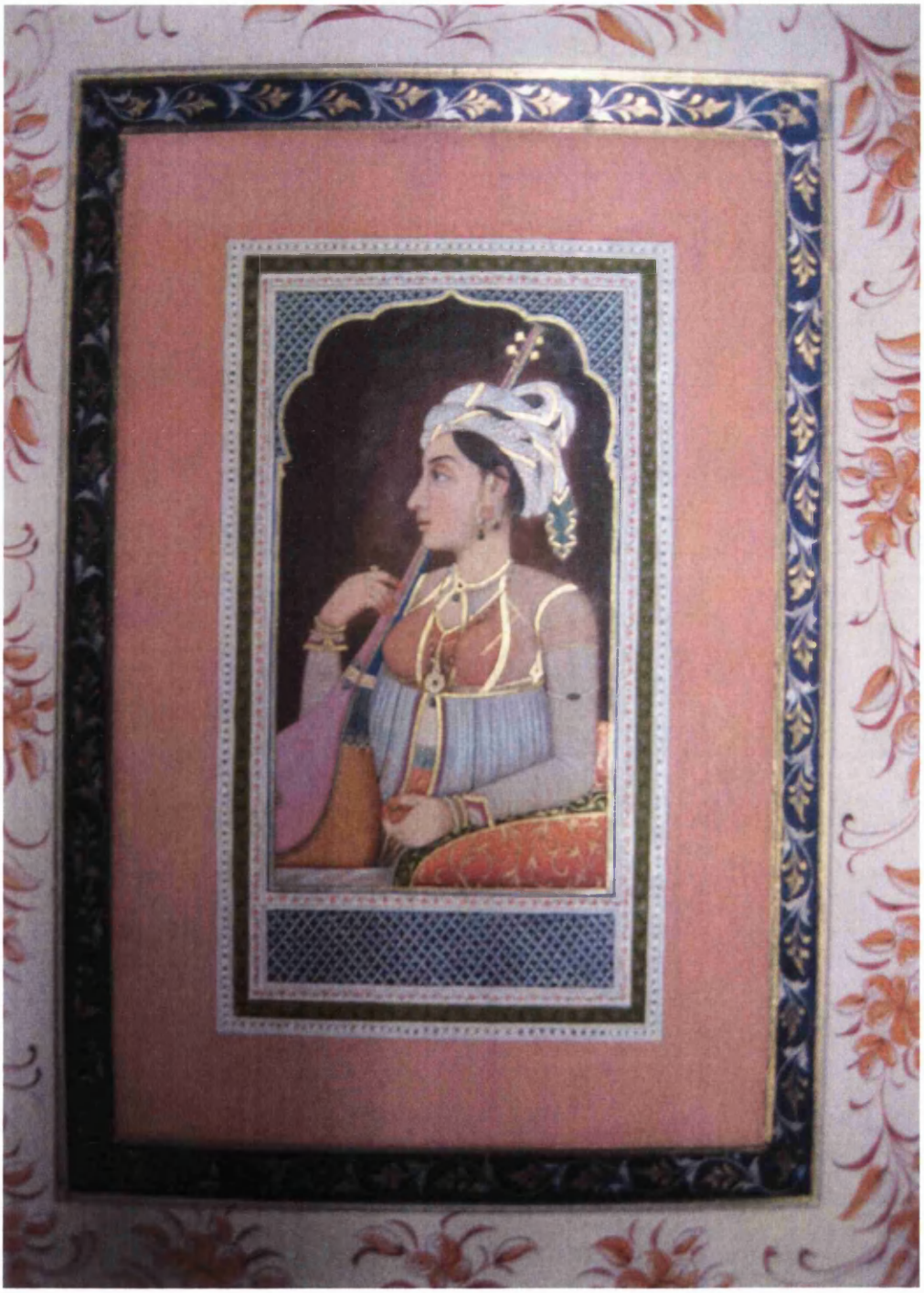
Faizabad, c. 1776-86

Image: 19.6 x 13.2 cm; Folio: 40 x 28 cm

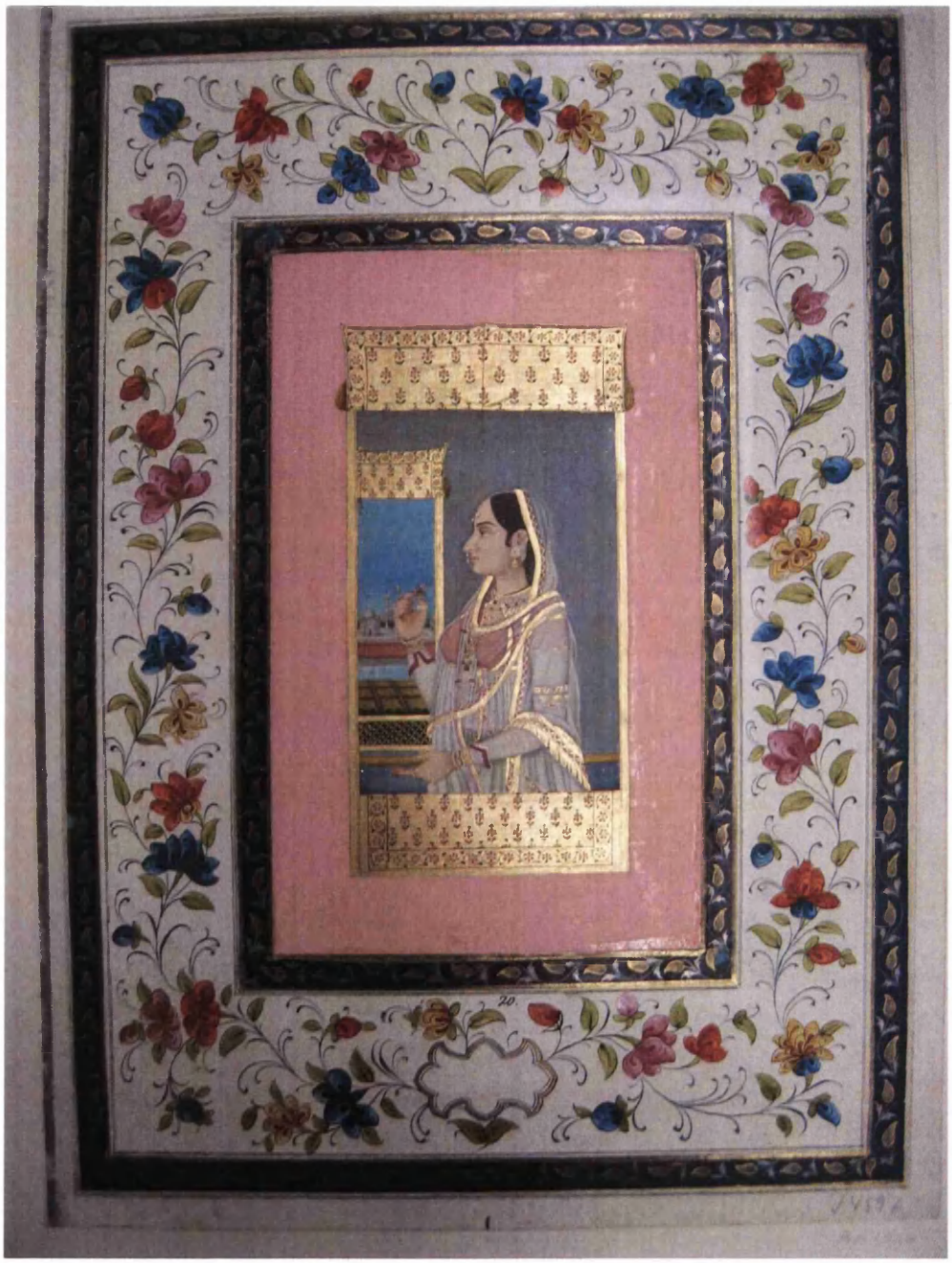
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4597 folio 18

Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier

Unpublished



10
'A portrait of a lady with the Taj Mahal in the distance'
Here attributed to Mihr Chand
Faizabad, c. 1776-86
Image: 22.1 x 13.3 cm; Folio: 40 x 28 cm
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4597 folio 20
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Unpublished



11
'A portrait of a lady resting a tambura on her shoulder'
Here attributed to Mihr Chand
Faizabad, c. 1776-86
Image: 18.2 x 12.5 cm
Present location unknown
Provenance: Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bt. (1792-1872), Bibliotheca Phillippica Ms. 6730; Antoine Polier
Published: Sotheby's (1974, Lot 736)

12
'A portrait of a lady with a mosque in the distance'
Here attributed to Mihr Chand
Faizabad, c. 1776-86
Image: 20.8 x 11.9 cm
Present location unknown
Provenance: Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bt. (1792-1872), Bibliotheca Phillippica Ms. 6730; Antoine Polier
Published: Sotheby's (1974, Lot 728)

13
'A portrait of a lady'
Here attributed to Mihr Chand
Faizabad, c. 1776-86
Image: 17.5 x 10.4 cm
Present location unknown
Provenance: Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bt. (1792-1872), Bibliotheca Phillippica Ms. 6730; Antoine Polier
Published: Sotheby's (1974, Lot 750)

14
'A portrait of a lady with a view of a garden in the background' (left)
Here attributed to Mihr Chand
Faizabad, c. 1776-86
Folio: 45 x 61.3 cm
Achenbach Collection for Graphic Arts, San Francisco, 1982.70.1
Provenance: Mr. and Mrs. John D. MacDonald; Lady Eyre Coote; Antoine Polier
Published: Welch (1978, plate 35)

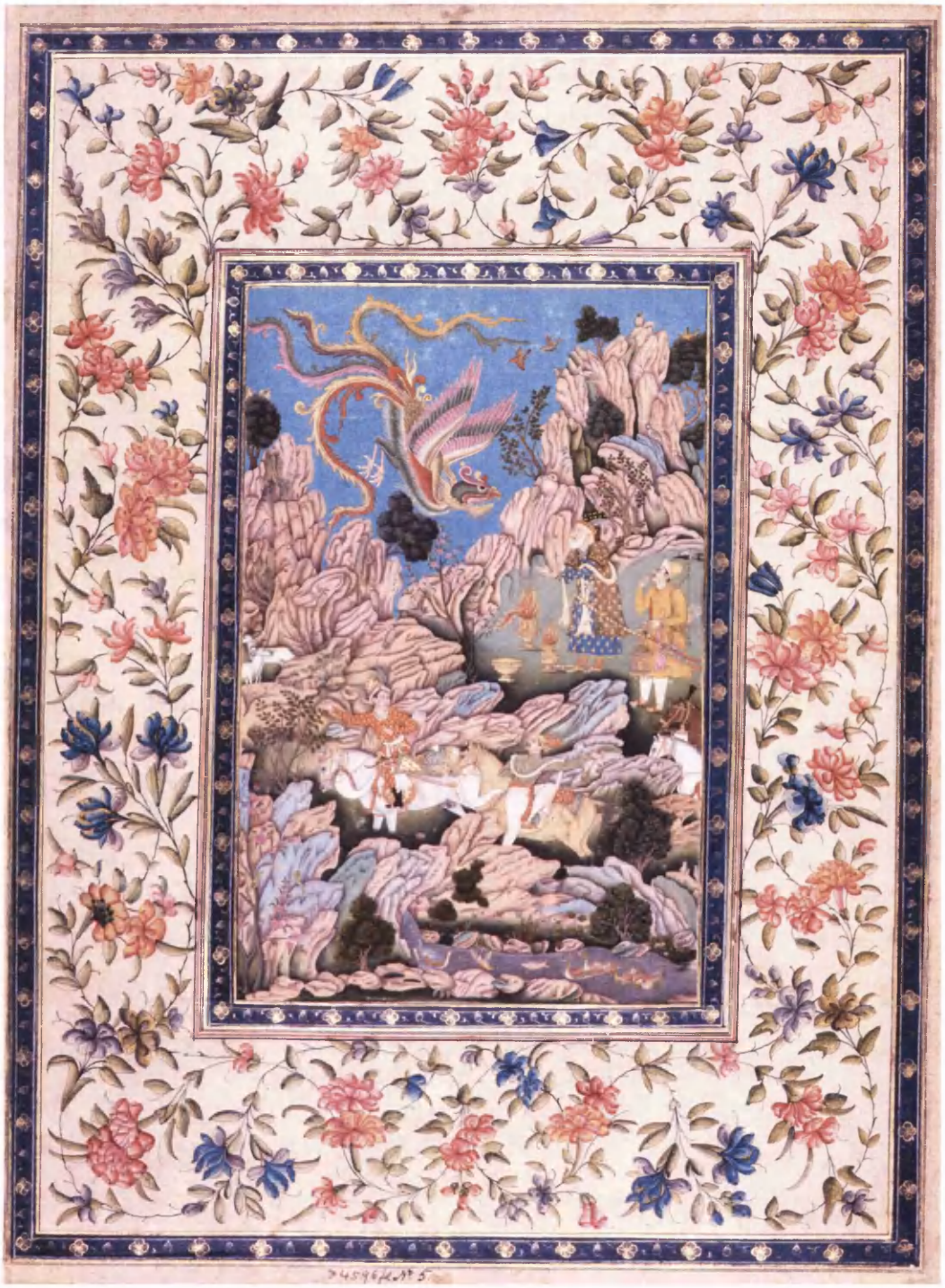
15
'A portrait of a lady set against a landscape' (right)
Here attributed to Mihr Chand
Faizabad, c. 1776-86
Folio: 45 x 61.3 cm
Achenbach Collection for Graphic Arts, San Francisco, 1982.70.1
Provenance: Mr. and Mrs. John D. MacDonald; Lady Eyre Coote; Antoine Polier
Published: Welch (1978, plate 35)

16
Babur
Here attributed to Mihr Chand or his workshop
Faizabad, c. 1776-86
Folio: 62.0 x 46 cm
Museum für Indische Kunst, I 5005 folio 15a
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Published: Weber (1982, p. 459)

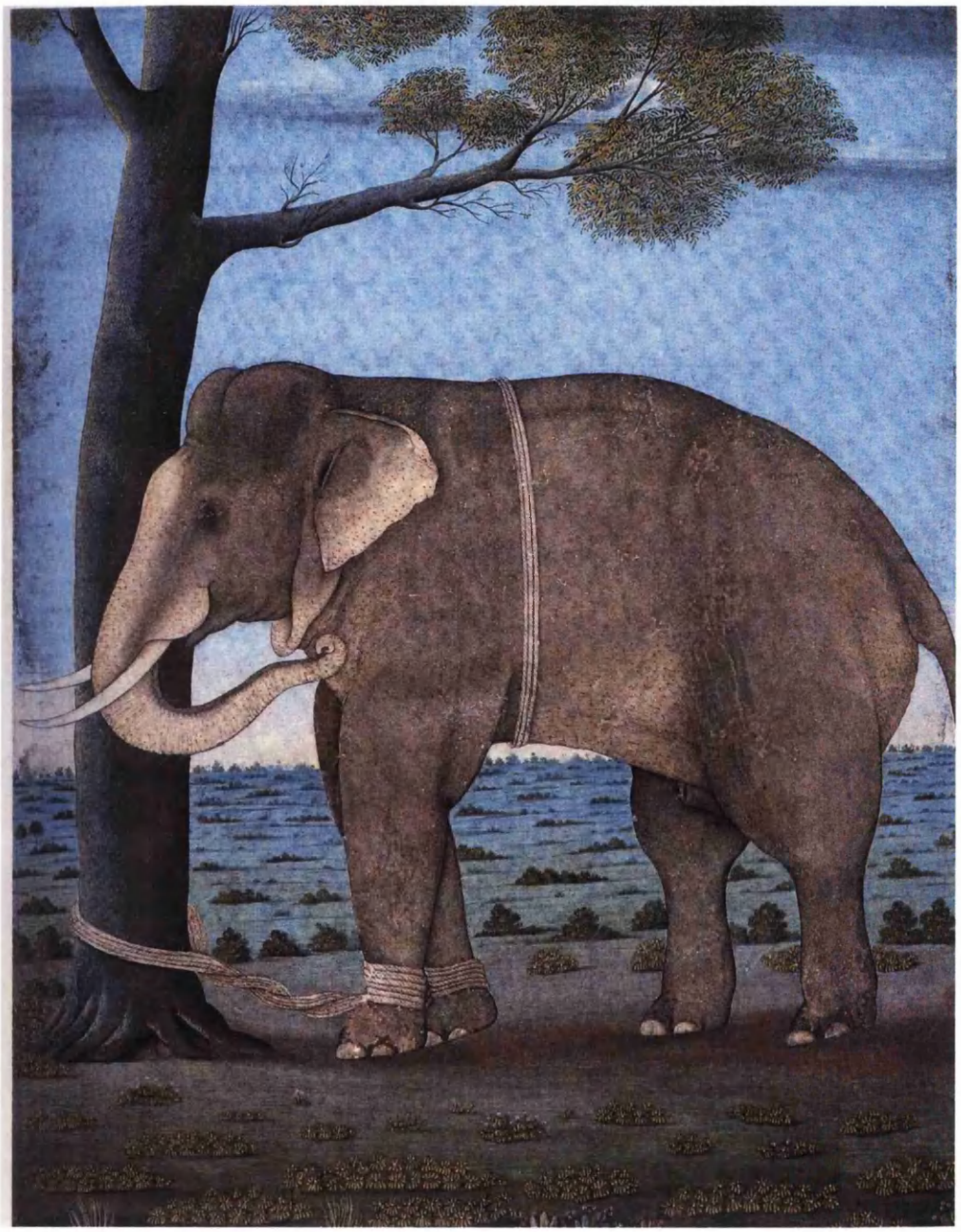
17
Babur
Inscribed in Persian: *'Zahiru'd-din Muhammad Babur Badshah Ghazi'*
Here attributed to Mihr Chand
Faizabad, c. 1776-86
Image: 13.3 x 22.1 cm; Folio: 17.4 x 28.6 cm
Museum für Indische Kunst, I 5063 folio 5b.
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Published: Weber (1982, 385)

18
Portrait of Mir Jafar
Inscribed in Persian: *'tasvir mubasshir jafar hamsare zade khalife sultan'*
Here attributed to Mihr Chand
Faizabad or Lucknow, c. 1760
V&A, IS 182-1952.
Unpublished

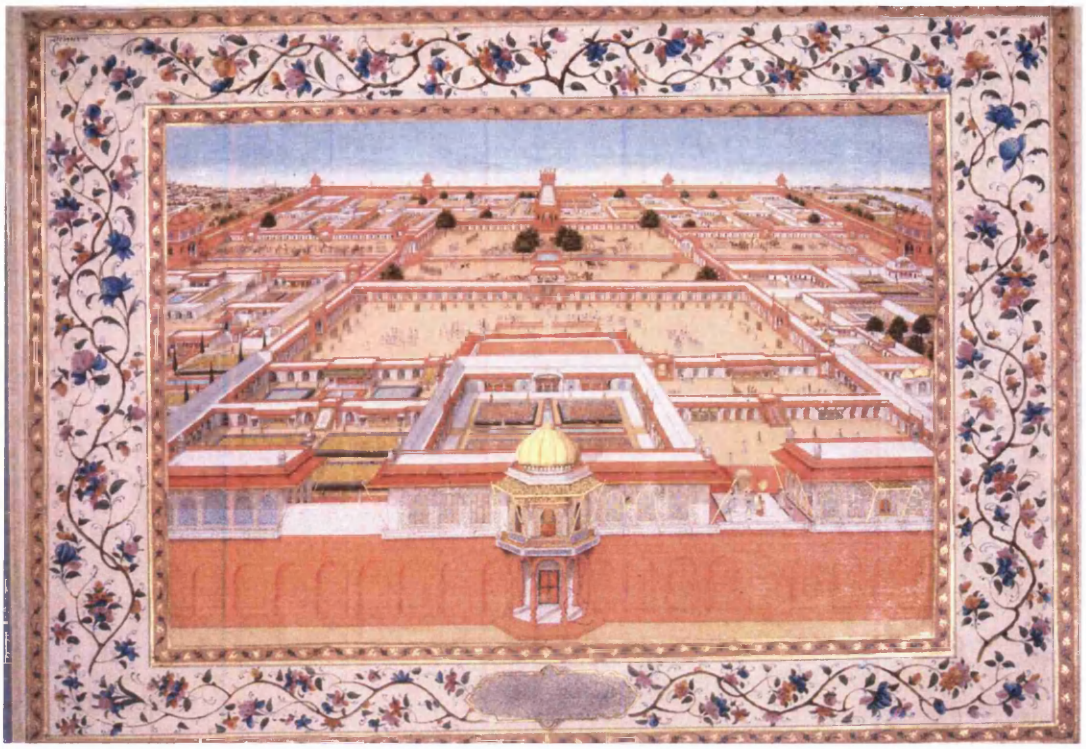
19
'Zal summoning the simurgh to help Rustam by burning a feather on a brazier'
Here attributed to Mihr Chand
Faizabad, c. 1765-73
Museum für Islamische Kunst, I 4596 folio 6r
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Published: Kheiri (1921, 5)



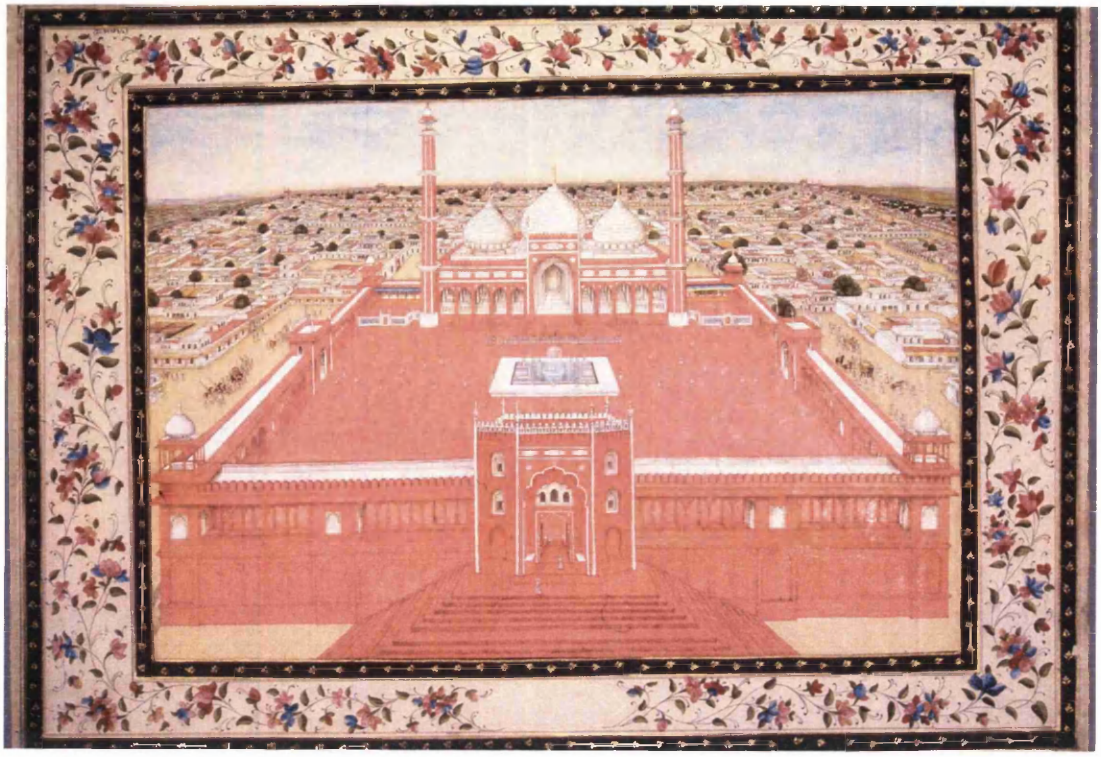
20
'An Elephant tethered to a tree'
Attributed by Robert Skelton to Mihr Chand
Faizabad, c. 1765-76
Image: 23.6 x 18.7 cm
Fondation Custodia, Paris 1986.T.7
Provenance: Sven Gahlin (London), Howard Hodgkin (London), Jean Pozzi (Paris), Paul Meurice (Paris), Sir Elijah Impey.
Published: Gahlin (1991, plate 51)



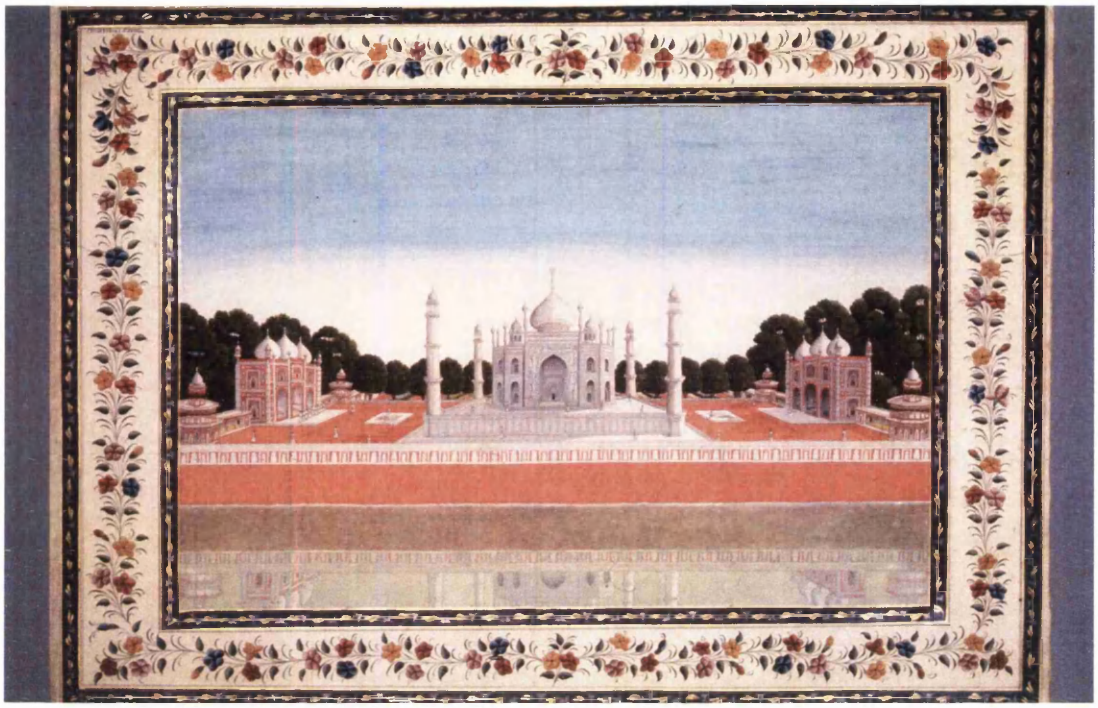
21
Red Fort in Delhi
Here attributed to Mihr Chand
Delhi or Lucknow, c. 1776-86
Image: 30.5 x 43.8 cm; Folio:
Museum für Indische Kunst, I 5005 folio 11r
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Published: Gadebusch (2000, 69)



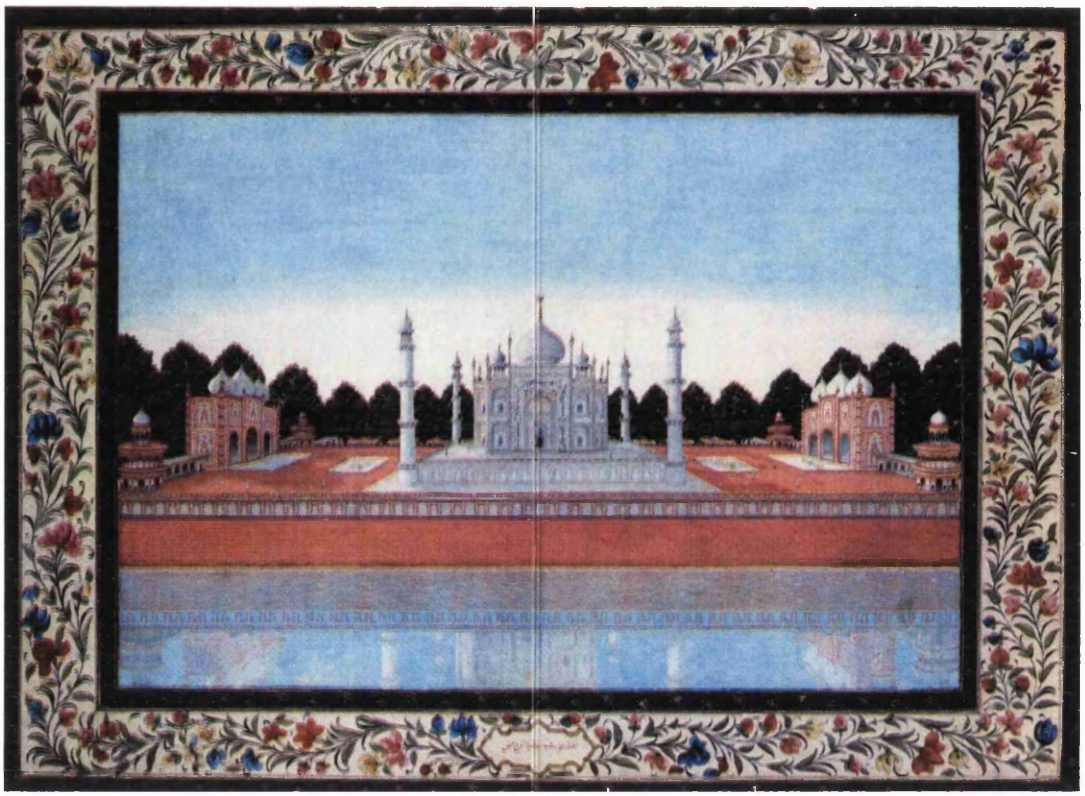
22
Jami Masjid at Delhi
Here attributed to Mihr Chand
Delhi or Lucknow, c. 1776-86
Museum für Indische Kunst, I 5005 folio 2.
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Unpublished



23
The Taj Mahal
Here attributed to Mihr Chand
Delhi or Lucknow, c. 1776-86
Museum für Indische Kunst, I 5005 folio 16.
Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier
Unpublished



24
The Taj Mahal
Here attributed to Mihr Chand
Delhi or Lucknow, c. 1776-86
Present location unknown
Provenance: Antoine Polier
Published: Eyre & Hobehouse (1984)



Appendix III
Rejected attributions

1
'Khwaja Mu'in al-Din Chishti kneels under a scalloped archway holding a book'
Attributed by L. Leach to Mihr Chand
Inscribed: 'tasvir-i khwaja mu'in al-din chishti' ['portrait of Khwaja Mu'in al-Din Chishti]
Faizabad, c. 1770
Image: 16.4 x 11.2 cm
Chester Beatty Library, 34.12
Published: Leach (1995, 657-59)

2
'A haloed Muslim saint sits with both hands resting on the scrolled arms of a European style'
Attributed by L. Leach to Mihr Chand
Inscribed: 'tasvir-i hazrat yahya muniri' [picture of Hazrat Yahya Muniri]
Faizabad, c. 1770
Image: 15.5 x 12cm
Chester Beatty Library, 34.13
Published: Leach (1995, 658-59)

3
'Women spied upon by a stream'
Attributed by L. Leach to Mihr Chand
Faizabad, c. 1770
Image: : 26 x 35.9
Chester Beatty Library, 34.17
Published: Leach (1995, 659)

Appendix IV
Albums commissioned by Antoine Polier

Title or Inscription in Fronstispiece	Date of assembly	Provenance	Present Location
Hindu Mythology, Volume 1	1776-86	Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier	BL APAC, Or. 4769
Hindu Mythology, Volume 2	1776-86	Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier	BL APAC, Or. 4770
Inscribed in Persian: 'This album of forty folios in nasta'liq and other scripts for his Honour of bountiful nature (qualities) the Nawab of high station (exalted position), the Pre-eminent of the Kingdom, the Glory of the State, the valiant Major Polier, Lion in Battle, May his Good Fortune Endure!, on the ninth of the sacred month of Zihija (in the) year 1190.'	1190 A.H./1776 A.D.	Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier	MIK, I 4594
Inscribed in Persian: 'This album of forty folios (leaves) with specimens (fragments) of nasta'liq and shikasteh etc., in the handwriting of masters (was prepared) for his honour the Glory of the State, the Pre-eminent of the Kingdom, the valiant Major Polier, Lion in Battle, May his Good Fortune endure!'	1190 A.H./1776 A.D.	Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier	MIK, I 4595

'Volume Troisieme' Inscribed in Persian: 'Album of thirty folios (leaves) with specimens (fragments) of nasta'liq, etc., by excellent penmen of the (present) day (time, era). It was completed (was received into arrangement) for his Honour of bountiful nature (qualities) the Nawab of high station (exalted position), the Pre-eminent of the Kingdom, the Glory of the State, the valiant Major Polier, Lion in Battle, May his Good Fortune Endure!, on the second of the sacred month of Muharram (in the) year 1190 of the Hijra.'	1190 A.H./1776 A.D.	Provenance: Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier	MIK, I 4596
[Blank frontispiece]		Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier	MIK, I 4597
[Blank frontispiece]		Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier	MIK, I 4598
'Volume Septieme.' Inscribed in Persian: 'This album of forty folios (leaves) with specimens (fragments) of nasta'liq, shikasteh, suls, etc., from excellent penmen, unique of the (present) day (time, era). was completed for his Honour of bountiful nature (qualities) the Nawab of high station (exalted position), the Pre-eminent of the Kingdom, the Glory of the State, the valiant Major Polier, Lion in Battle, May his Good Fortune Endure!, in the City of Shahjahanabad on the twenty seventh of the honoured month of Rajab (in the) year 1190 of the Hijra corresponding with the 18th auspicious regnal year of Shah 'Alam Padshah Ghazi, May His Kingdom Endure!'	1190 A.H./1776 A.D.	Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier	MIK, I 4599

[Blank frontispiece]	1776-86	Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier	MAK, I 5005
'*Genialogie des Empereurs*' Inscribed in Persian: 'Album of twenty folios (leaves) with specimens (fragments) of nasta'liq, naskh and other scripts, of the best calligraphy of the era for his Honour of bountiful nature (qualities) the Nawab of high station (exalted position), the Pre-eminent of the Kingdom, the Glory of the State, the valiant Major Polier, Lion in Battle, May his Good Fortune Endure!'	c. 1784	Beckford-Hamilton; Antoine Polier	MAK, I 5063
Album presented to Lady Coote Inscribed in Persian: 'This book of drawings and specimens of fine penmanship in the art of similitude and expedition done together with pieces of nasta'liq and suls, shafiaic, golzar, and skekasteh scripts.'	1776-86	Mr. and Mrs. John MacDonald; Lady Eyre Coote; Antoine Polier	Dispersed, split between the Achenbach Collection for Graphic Arts and the Sackler Museum at Harvard University
[Blank frontispiece]	1773-76	Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bt. (1792-1872), Bibliotheca Phillippica Ms. 6730; Antoine Polier	Dispersed at auction Sotheby's 1974

APPENDIX V

Portraits by Tilly Kettle produced during visit to Faizabad (1772-73)

Shuja ud-Daula and Asaf ud-Daula.
Faizabad, 1772.
Royal Collection, Versailles.
Provenance: Commissioned by General Barker

Shuja ud-Daula, Nawab of Oudh, and four sons with General Barker and military officers
Faizabad, 1772
Victoria Memorial Hall, Calcutta
Provenance: Commissioned by General Barker

Shuja ud-Daula
Faizabad, 1772
Lucknow State Museum

Shuja ud-Daula, Nawab of Oudh, holding a bow
Faizabad, 1772
Yale Centre for British Art
Provenance: Henry Chicheley Plowden, possibly Warren Hastings

Shuja ud-Daula smoking from a hookah
Kirpal Singh Collection (Roseville, California)

Dancing girl
Faizabad, 1772
Yale Center for British Art